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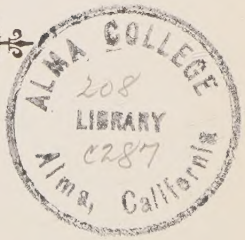

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St. Thomas Aquinas:

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH AND PATRON OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.[1]

(1225–1274.)

By A MEMBER OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER.

I.—Birth and Early Life.

The thirteenth century was a time of extraordinary intellectual activity, which was not without its dangers. In the enthusiastic pursuit of learning, students flocked by thousands to the great Universities, which, unhappily, were as often schools of infidelity as of faith. The philosophers of the age owned but one master, and he was a heathen. "Aristotle," says Lacordaire, "was taken to be the representative of wisdom; and unfortunately, Aristotle and the Gospel did not always agree;" and many, entering on the unexplored sea of thought without a guide, made hopeless shipwreck of their faith. The great professors who were the oracles of the day were not always proof against the seductions of vanity, and sometimes tried to make themselves a name by striking out bold theories in matters where original speculation is seldom friendly to the faith.

[1] The facts here related about St. Thomas Aquinas are chiefly drawn from the sketch in the March volume of the *Année Dominicaine*.

It was amidst the confusion of these new opinions that St. Thomas Aquinas was given to the world to mark out the limits of Christian philosophy, and to form the separate materials of dogmatic, moral, and speculative theology into one grand and finished structure, whilst at the same time he enriched the Church's liturgy with some of the most beautiful of its devotional formularies, and displayed in his life and character all the virtues and winning graces of a Saint.

Picturesquely situated in southern Italy on the top of a rugged cliff flanking a spur of the Apennines, and overlooking the rushing waters of the Melfi, there stood in mediæval times the fortress of Rocca-Secca. Here St. Thomas was born about the year 1225 (authors are not agreed as to the precise date); and to the neighbouring little town of Aquino he owed his surname of Aquinas. The Count, his father, was nephew to the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, and on his mother's side, he was descended from the Norman Barons who had conquered Sicily two centuries before. The Aquino family could claim relationship with St. Gregory the Great, and was allied by blood to St. Louis of France and St. Ferdinand of Castille. The future vocation and sanctity of the little Thomas had been predicted to his mother, the Countess Theodora, by a holy hermit of the name of Bonus; and, whilst he was yet an infant, God's watchful Providence over him was manifested in a striking manner. A terrific thunderstorm burst over the Castle, and his nurse and his little sister were struck dead in the very chamber in which Thomas slept on unharmed. This circumstance accounts for the great fear of thunder and lightning which the Saint is said to have had throughout life, which caused him often to take refuge in the church during a thunderstorm, even leaning his head against the Tabernacle, so as to place himself as closely as possible under the protection of our Lord.[1]

[1] Hence the popular devotion to St. Thomas as Patron against thunderstorms and sudden death. Crosses are blessed against lightning, bearing on one side the image of the Saint and on the other a Latin inscription, which he left traced on the wall of a

The words *Ave Maria* were the first which his baby lips were heard to utter. Long before he could read, a book was discovered to be an unfailing means of drying his tears in all his childish woes; he would delight in handling it, turning over the leaves with infantine gravity.

When only five years old his education was begun by the monks of the celebrated Benedictine Abbey of Monte Cassino, which was only a few miles distant from Rocca-Secca. The monks found that their new pupil was a grave, quiet child, who loved to spend much of his time in the church, and was never without a book in his hand. He had considerable influence over his young companions, whom he was always ready to help, and to whom the sweetness of his disposition rendered him very dear; but he cared little for the sports of childhood in which he seldom took part. One day, when the rest of the merry band were playing in the woods, Thomas was standing apart in silent thought; the monk in charge of the boys inquired the subject of his reflections. The child raised his head and said: "Tell me, Master, what is God?" This was his oft-repeated question, and it showed that the whole bent of his mind and heart was already directed heavenward.

At ten years old he had made such progress in his studies that his parents resolved to send him, under the care of a tutor, to the newly-founded University of Naples. Before doing so, however, they took him to spend some weeks with them at another of their castles at Loreto, a spot afterwards destined to become so famous as the resting-place of the Holy House of Nazareth. A famine prevailed at the time, and Thomas delighted in distributing the abundant alms which his charitable parents had set aside for the poor. He carried his liberality so far that the steward of the Castle complained

cavern at Anagni, into which he more than once retired during a thunderstorm, and of which the following is a translation: "The Cross to me is certain salvation. The Cross is that which I ever adore. The Cross of the Lord is with me. The Cross is my refuge."

to his father. The Count waylaid the child as he was hurrying with bread to the gate and sternly asked what was hidden under his cloak. Thomas let go the folds, and there fell to the ground, not the food which he had taken, but a profusion of lovely and sweet-scented flowers.

On his arrival in Naples the extraordinary talents of which he had already given proof under his Benedictine teachers became more and more manifest, whilst at the same time he made rapid progress in the science of the Saints. He was continually held up as a model to his fellow-students in a way most painful to his humility; but the modesty, sweetness, and gentleness of his character preserved him from envy, and gained for him universal affection. He shunned all occasions of evil, and devoted his leisure hours to prayer and good works. The Dominican church became one of his favourite resorts; and, as he poured forth his soul in prayer before the altar, bright rays of light were more than once seen to issue from his countenance. A holy Friar, named John of St. Julian, who had witnessed the wonderful sight, one day said to the pious youth: "God has given you to our Order." Thomas threw himself on his knees, saying that he had long and ardently desired to take the habit, but that he feared he was unworthy of so great a grace. The Community joyfully admitted the young student; and, whilst still almost a boy, he was publicly clothed in the white habit of St. Dominic.

The news soon reached the ears of the Countess Theodora, his mother, who, recognizing in the event the fulfilment of the holy hermit's prophecy, hastened to Naples to congratulate her son. Thomas and the brethren, however, who were ignorant of her dispositions, were much alarmed at the idea of the impending visit; and, in compliance with his own earnest entreaties, the novice was hurried off to the Convent of Santa Sabina in Rome. Thither his mother followed him, but she was unable to induce him to consent to an interview. The General of the Order, John the German, was on the point of starting for Paris and resolved to take Thomas and

three other companions with him ; and they accordingly left Rome together. When Theodora found herself thus foiled and mistrusted, she became furious against the friars, and sent orders to her two elder sons, who were then serving in the Emperor's army in Italy, to waylay their brother and bring him back to her. The little party of friars were overtaken and seized as they were taking their midday rest by a wayside fountain. The rough soldiers tried to tear the habit from Thomas's back ; but his stout resistance compelled them to give up the attempt. His companions were suffered to continue their journey, whilst the young novice was carried off to his angry parents at Rocca-Secca.

The Countess was now determined that he should never be a Dominican ; and his father, who would gladly have seen him assume the Benedictine habit, that, like one of his uncles, he might rise to the dignity of Abbot of Monte Cassino, was equally determined that he should never belong to the despised mendicant Order he had embraced. Tears, threats, and entreaties proving powerless to shake the Saint's resolution, he was imprisoned in one of the towers of the Castle, where he had to suffer cold, hunger, and every sort of privation. His two sisters, Marietta and Theodora, to whom he was tenderly attached, vainly endeavoured by their affectionate caresses to induce him to yield to his mother's wishes ; but they were themselves won to a life of perfection ; and both eventually died in the odour of sanctity, one as a Benedictine Abbess, the other in the married state as Countess of San Severino. Through their instrumentality, Thomas was enabled to obtain books and clothes from his Brethren at Naples. During his captivity, which lasted considerably more than a year, he managed to commit to memory the entire Bible and the five books of the *Sentences*, the theological text-book of the time. His earliest writings are said to belong to the same period.

On the arrival of his brothers Thomas's constancy was put to a yet more terrible trial. The two young officers conceived the infernal project of introducing a woman of

evil life into his chamber; but with a flaming brand snatched from the hearth the Saint indignantly drove her from his presence. With the same brand he then traced a cross upon the wall; and, casting himself on his knees before it, besought of God to grant him the gift of perpetual chastity. As he prayed, he fell into an ecstasy, during which two angels appeared to him and girded him with a miraculous cord, saying, "We are come from God to invest thee with the girdle of perpetual chastity. The Lord has heard thy prayer; and that which human frailty can never merit, is ensured to thee by the irrevocable gift of God." The angels girded him so tightly that he uttered an involuntary cry of pain, which brought some servants to the spot; but Thomas kept his secret to himself, and only revealed it on his deathbed to his confessor, Brother Reginald, declaring that from that day the spirit of darkness had never been allowed to approach him. The girdle was worn by the Saint till his death, and is still preserved at the Convent of Chieri in Piedmont.[1]

By this time his family had discovered that his firmness would not be overcome by persecution. Though unwilling to acknowledge themselves beaten, they connived at his escape, and, like St. Paul, he was let down from the tower in a basket to the friars, who by appointment were waiting below. They carried off their rescued treasure to Naples, where he was immediately admitted to profession. One more attempt was made to shake his constancy by an appeal to the Pope, who summoned him to Rome; but the Saint pleaded his cause so well that the Holy Father was convinced of the reality of his vocation. In order to satisfy his family, however, and to secure in an important post the services of so gifted a subject, the Pope proposed to make him Abbot of Monte Cassino, whilst still continuing a Dominican. But St. Thomas implored so earnestly that he might be allowed

[1] In the sixteenth century a Confraternity was established, called "the Angelic Warfare," to obtain through the intercession of St. Thomas the virtue of chastity. This Confraternity still flourishes and has been enriched with many indulgences.

to remain a simple religious in the Order he had chosen, that his Holiness yielded, and strictly forbade any further interference with his vocation.

To put him beyond reach of further molestation, the General of the Order took him with him to Cologne, where he became the disciple of Blessed Albert the Great, the renowned Dominican professor of the day. When St. Thomas found himself safe within the convent walls, he devoted himself with ardour to the work of his sanctification. His time was divided between prayer and study. His humility enabled him to conceal his vast powers of mind; and his absolute silence at all the scholastic disputations, rendered more conspicuous by his commanding stature and the portliness of his figure, led his companions to call him "the dumb ox of Sicily."[1] A good natured fellow-student offered to explain the daily lessons to him—an offer which the Saint humbly and gratefully accepted. But one day the young teacher came to a difficult passage, which he interpreted wrongly. Then the Saint's charity and love of truth triumphed over his humility, and, taking the book, he explained the passage with the utmost clearness and precision. His astonished friend begged in future to be the scholar, to which Thomas consented, on condition his secret should be kept. Shortly after this, a paper written by the Saint and containing a masterly solution of a most abstruse question, fell accidentally into the hands of Blessed Albert. Astonished at the genius it displayed, he next day put the learning of his saintly disciple to a public test, and exclaimed before the assembled students, "We call Brother Thomas 'the dumb ox'; but I tell you he will one day make his bellowing heard to the uttermost parts of the earth!"

II.—Work in his Order and in the Church.

In the summer of 1245, a year after St. Thomas's arrival at Cologne, the General Chapter of the Dominican Order commanded Blessed Albert to proceed to Paris

[1] *I.e.*, Naples.

and take the degree of Doctor in that University, and he obtained permission to take Brother Thomas as his companion. The two Saints set out on foot, staff in hand, carrying on their shoulders the breviary and Bible, to which Brother Thomas added the book of *Sentences*. At midday they rested by some spring to eat the food they had begged on their way. At night they generally found shelter in the guest quarters of some monastery. In this manner they reached the convent of St. James at Paris, where St. Thomas became the model of the whole community, by his spirit of prayer, his profound humility, perfect obedience, and universal charity. He tried to imitate the virtues he observed in his brethren, and judged himself utterly unworthy of living in such saintly company. Never was he known to utter an idle word; when he did speak, the charm of his heavenly conversation filled all who heard him with spiritual consolation. A celestial grace beamed from his beautiful countenance, so that some said they had only to look at him to feel within themselves a renewal of fervour.

A young Franciscan was at this time studying at Paris, Bonaventure by name, to whom St. Thomas became knit in bonds of closest friendship; they, who were in after ages to be honoured in the Church as the Seraphic and Angelic Doctors, were dear to each other on earth as Jonathan and David; and after their three years of study, they were raised together to the degree of Bachelor of Theology, in 1248. In the November of that year Blessed Albert was sent back to Cologne, again accompanied by St. Thomas, who taught under his direction. Scholars were not slow to discover that the two Dominican professors excelled all others, and the new school at Cologne was soon filled to overflowing. St. Thomas's lessons fully bore out the five principles of teaching which he has himself laid down, viz., clearness, brevity, utility, sweetness, and maturity. He possessed a wonderful gift of communicating knowledge, so that more was learnt from him in a few months than from others in several years.

It was soon after his return to Cologne that the Saint was raised to the priesthood; from that time he seemed more closely than ever united to God. He used to spend many hours of the day and a great part of the night in the church; whilst offering the Holy Sacrifice he shed abundant tears, and the ardour of his devotion communicated itself to those who assisted at his Mass.

After teaching for four years at Cologne, Thomas was ordered by the General Chapter to prepare to take his degree as Doctor. This was a terrible blow to his humility, as he sincerely judged himself unfit for the dignity. On his way to Paris, whither he had now to repair, he preached at the court of the Duchess of Brabant, at whose request he wrote a treatise on the government of the Jews, which is full of wisdom and moderation. Later on, he was often consulted on most important matters of state, specially by St. Louis of France, who was tenderly attached to him. He arrived in Paris in 1252, and from the first his success in teaching was so great that the vast halls of the Convent of St. James were unable to contain his audience. The University congratulated the Order on the acquisition of so great a treasure, and proposed at once to grant him the license preliminary to the acts required for taking the degree of Doctor, although he was nearly ten years under the age required by the statutes.

But this step was delayed by a dispute which arose between the Friars and the secular Doctors. The quarrel originated in the refusal of the former to take an oath to close their schools whenever the rights of the University were attacked; and it was fanned into a flame by the publication of a book, entitled *The Perils of the Latter Times*, in which the new mendicant Orders were attacked in the most calumnious and scandalous terms. This work, which came from the pen of a Paris Doctor, William de St. Amour, a man of violent and heretical opinions, was referred by St. Louis to the judgment of the Pope. St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure were summoned to the Papal Court to act as the champions of the regulars, and the pen of Blessed Albert the Great was

also called into requisition. St. Thomas's eloquent defence procured the condemnation of the book, and delivered the mendicant Orders from destruction; and by the joint exertions of the Pope and St. Louis, the University was compelled to yield, and to readmit the Friars to their theological chairs. On the 23rd of October, 1257, the two Saints were allowed to take their Doctor's degree. St. Thomas's humility had been so sorely distressed at the idea of this promotion, that he could not bring himself to prepare the preliminary public address until the very eve of the day on which it was to be delivered. Then, as it would seem by Divine inspiration, he chose for his text the words of the Psalm ciii. 13: "Thou waterest the hills from Thy upper rooms; the earth shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works"—words which he interpreted to refer to Jesus Christ, who, as the head of men and angels, waters the heavenly spirits with glory, whilst He fills the Church militant on earth with the fruits of His works through the Sacraments, which apply the merits of His sacred Passion to our souls. But the event gave to this text the character of a prophecy regarding the Saint's own future career.

In 1259 St. Thomas was deputed, in concert with Blessed Albert and other learned men of the Order, to draw up ordinances to regulate the studies of the brethren. A year or two later he was summoned to Italy, to teach in the schools attached to the Papal Court. As these schools followed the Pope from place to place, several of the great cities of Italy and many of the convents of his Order enjoyed for a time the privilege of the Saint's teaching. It is pleasant to think that the streets of our own metropolis have probably been trodden by the feet of the holy Doctor, who is said to have been present at the General Chapter of the Order held in London in 1263.

After being for some time stationed in Rome, he was again appointed to teach in Paris in 1269. The Doctors of the University referred to his decision a controversy which had arisen concerning the sacramental species in the Holy Eucharist. After long and fervent prayer, the

Saint put his own opinion on the subject into writing, laid the manuscript at the foot of the crucifix on the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, and then prayed as follows: "Lord Jesus, who art truly present and dost work wonders in this adorable Sacrament, I implore Thee to grant that, if what I have written be the truth, Thou wilt enable me to teach it; but that, if it contains anything contrary to the faith, Thou wilt hinder me from proceeding further in declaring it." Then the other friars, who were watching, beheld our Lord Himself descend and stand upon the manuscript, and they heard from His Divine lips the words: "Thomas, thou hast written well concerning the Sacrament of My Body." The Saint immediately fell into an ecstasy, in which he was raised a cubit from the ground.

In 1271 he returned to Italy, and began to teach in Rome. During the following Holy Week he preached in St. Peter's on the Passion of our Lord; and those who heard him on Good Friday were moved to tears and ceased not to weep until Easter Day, when his Paschal sermon filled them with holy jubilation. On that day, as he came down from the pulpit, a poor woman who had been hopelessly ill for a long time kissed the hem of his mantle and was immediately cured. Meanwhile the Universities of Paris and of Naples were vying with each other in their efforts to get possession of the great Doctor. Naples gained the day; and the Saint accordingly repaired, towards the end of the summer of 1272, to this the last scene of his labours as a professor.

During all these busy years of teaching, St. Thomas's pen had been at work indefatigably, enriching the schools and the Church with invaluable treatises, which fill twenty volumes. Within the narrow limits of these pages it is impossible to do more than name a very few of his most important writings. He commented on the works of Aristotle, and purged the text of the pagan philosopher from everything opposed to the truths of the faith, whilst at the same time he chose the terms of Aristotle's philosophy as the most scientific classification of the ideas of the human mind, and thus established a complete

system of Christian philosophy. His "Summa against the Gentiles" was written by command of St. Raymond of Pennafort, the third General of the Order, to combat the false philosophical doctrines introduced by the Saracens into Spain, which were making their way into the Universities of Europe. In this work St. Thomas demonstrates the truth of revealed religion and triumphantly proves that Christianity can never be contrary to sound reason. The holy Doctor has written treatises on the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Creed, Commentaries on various parts of Holy Scripture, and answers to sundry questions proposed to him for solution. Pope Urban IV. charged him with the task of collecting all the most beautiful passages of the Fathers of the Church on the Gospels. The result was his *Catena Aurea*, or "Golden Chain," which is entirely made up of quotations, written in great part from memory. The Saint, as he travelled from convent to convent, had read the works, now of one, now of another, of the Fathers, and his marvellous memory enabled him to retain and transcribe the passages bearing on his subject. The most famous of his works is his "Summa of Theology," at which he laboured, in the intervals of teaching and preaching, for the last nine years of his life, and which he did not live to complete.

Of this work Pope John XXII. is reported to have said that St. Thomas had worked as many miracles as it contains articles; and its value is perhaps best attested by the hatred with which it has ever been regarded by heretics. In 1520 Luther caused it to be burnt in the public square of Wittenberg, and another of the so-called Reformers, Martin Bucer, exclaimed, "Suppress Thomas and I will destroy the Church"; "A vain wish," remarks Pope Leo XIII., "but not a vain testimony." At the Council of Trent, three works of reference only were laid on the table of the hall of Assembly: they were the Holy Scriptures, the Pontifical Acts, and the *Summa* of St. Thomas; and from the *Summa* the Catechism of the Council of Trent was compiled by three Dominican Fathers.

But perhaps St. Thomas's chief title to the love and veneration of the faithful generally is the part which he took in the institution of the Feast of Corpus Christi. When he presented to Pope Urban IV. the first part of his *Catena Aurea*, about 1263, the delighted Pontiff wished in token of gratitude to raise him to the episcopate. But St. Thomas threw himself on his knees and implored the Holy Father to grant, as the only reward he would ever accept for his labours, that the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, already established through the prayers of the Blessed Juliana and the influence of the Dominican Cardinal Hugh of St. Cher, in Germany and the Low Countries, should be extended to the Universal Church. Urban gladly consented, and ordered St. Thomas to write the Office of the Feast. In this Office each of the responsories at matins is composed of two sentences, one drawn from the Old, and the other from the New Testament, which are thus made to render their united testimony to the great central mystery of Catholic belief. With its hymns, the *Verbum Supernum* and *Pange Lingua* we are all familiar, and specially with their concluding stanzas, the *O Salutaris* and the *Tantum Ergo*, always sung at Benediction; and from childhood our hearts have thrilled within us as we walked in processions of the Blessed Sacrament to the strains of the *Lauda Sion.*

Before presenting his Office to the Pope, St. Thomas placed it before the Tabernacle, and the miracle formerly worked at Paris was renewed, the words of approval proceeding from the lips of a crucifix still venerated at Orvieto. A similar testimony of Divine approval was granted to the Saint at Naples, and was witnessed by one of the friars. On this occasion also our Lord spoke to him from a Crucifix which is preserved in the Church of San Domenico Maggiore, saying, "Thou hast written well of Me, Thomas. What reward wilt thou have?" To which the Saint fervently replied, "No other than Thyself, O Lord."

To the pen of St. Thomas we are also indebted for the *Adoro Te*, for beautiful devotions before and after

Holy Communion, and many other prayers solid in doctrine and beautiful in expression. It is a tradition that he composed the well-known prayer, "Soul of Christ, sanctify me," which was a favourite one of St. Ignatius, who introduced it into his book of spiritual exercises, though leaving out the lovely petition, "Light of the sacred countenance of Jesus, shine down upon me," which is found in the old forms of the prayer. This petition occurs in the version of the *Anima Christi*, found in an old prayer-book called the *York Hours*, where it is stated to have been indulgenced by Pope John XXII. when said after the elevation at Mass. This prayer-book was published in 1517, four years before the conversion of St. Ignatius.

III.—Personal Traits.

St. Thomas was tall and inclined to corpulence, with a fine, massive head, a lofty forehead, refined and handsome features, and large, gentle eyes beaming with benevolence. His manners were singularly winning and graceful; and his prodigious powers of mind were accompanied by a childlike simplicity of character, which, no less than the purity of his doctrine, gained for him the title of the "Angel of the Schools." Though raised so high above others by his gigantic intellectual powers, he was the sweetest and most charitable of masters and of fathers, always ready to stoop to the capacity of the youngest and dullest of his scholars. No matter how important the affair might be on which he was engaged, his cell was always open to his brethren whenever they wished to speak to him, and he would cheerfully turn from the most absorbing occupation to give them his undivided attention. He listened to their difficulties, explained their doubts, and comforted them in their troubles. Nothing that concerned them was trifling in his eyes, and he never showed himself weary of their interruptions and importunities. In return they bore him the tenderest affection; "Doctor noster" they loved to call him;

and the sincerity of their attachment was amply proved by the bitterness of their grief when he was taken from them.

Long after his death, those who had known him could never speak of him without tears, so dearly did they love him. True son of St. Dominic, he cared only to speak of God or to God, and could not understand how a religious could take interest in any other topic. If the conversation turned to other subjects he ceased to take part in it; and he owned to his companions that it surprised him that a religious could think of anything but God. And what was perfectly incomprehensible to him was, how any one who knew himself to be in the state of mortal sin could eat, sleep, or be merry. When seculars came to seek advice and consolation from him, he lent them a willing ear, and after solving their doubts and consoling their sorrows, he never failed to tell them some short pious story or to speak a few words of edification, and then dismissed them, their hearts glowing with spiritual joy and Divine love.

We can picture St. Thomas to ourselves enjoying his ordinary recreation of walking up and down the cloister of his convent, occasionally dragged off by his brethren to take a breath of fresh air in the garden, but sure in such cases soon to be found in some remote corner, absorbed in thought. Of this abstraction of mind some amusing anecdotes are preserved, as for example that which shows him to us dining with St. Louis, and suddenly striking the table with his hand, exclaiming, "It is all up with the Manichees!" His companion gently endeavoured to recall him to the remembrance of the royal presence, whilst the good-natured King instantly summoned a secretary to commit to writing the convincing argument which had just presented itself to the mind of his saintly guest. Again at Naples, when the Cardinal Legate and the Archbishop of Capua came to visit him, he went to the cloister to receive them, but on the way became so absorbed in the solution of a theological difficulty, that, by the time he arrived, he had forgotten all about the business and the visitors that had called

him, and stood like one in a dream. The Archbishop, who had formerly been his pupil, assured the Cardinal that these reveries were perfectly familiar to all who were acquainted with the Saint's habits. This abstraction of mind at times rendered him insensible to pain, as, for example, when a wax candle once burnt his hand, while he remained in thought, unconscious of the fact.

The austere life of St. Thomas and his incessant labours increased the natural delicacy of his constitution, and he had frequent attacks of illness, which, however, do not appear ordinarily to have caused him to desist from the labour of composition. Surgery was rough and ready in the thirteenth century; and the extreme sensitiveness of St. Thomas's organization rendered its operations very terrible to him. On one occasion, when obliged to undergo a cautery, he begged the infirmarian to warn him of the coming of the surgeons, when he stretched himself on his bed and immediately went into ecstasy, remaining motionless whilst his flesh was burnt by the red-hot irons. His clothes were always the poorest in the convent, and his love of holy poverty was so great that his "Summa against the Gentiles" was written on the backs of old letters and other scraps of paper. In vain did the Sovereign Pontiffs press upon his acceptance the Archbishopric of Naples and other ecclesiastical dignities, together with ample revenues; nothing could shake his determination to live and die a simple religious; and they were obliged to withdraw their offers, being unwilling to afflict one so dear to them. He who was the oracle of his age loved to preach to the poor and lowly; and we are told that they always listened to him gladly and with much fruit to their souls. He was full of compassion for their wants, and even gave away his own clothes to cover them.

Humility was ever his characteristic virtue. So thoroughly had he realized the greatness of God and his own nothingness, that in a moment of intimacy he was able to say to a friend, "Thanks be to God! never has my knowledge, my title of Doctor, nor any of

my scholastic acts aroused in me a single movement of vainglory. If any motion has arisen, reason has instantly repressed it." From his humility sprang his extreme modesty in the expression of his opinion; never in the heat of disputation or at any other time was he known to lose his unruffled serenity of temper, or to say a word that could wound the feelings of another; and he bore the most cutting insults with imperturbable calmness. His life is full of examples of his spirit of humility and religious obedience. On one occasion, when, as a young religious, he was reading in the refectory at Paris, he was told by the official corrector to pronounce a word in a way evidently incorrect. St. Thomas obeyed, and made the false quantity. When asked how he could have consented to so obvious a blunder, he replied: "It matters little whether a syllable be long or short; but it matters much to practise humility and obedience." In later years, when the Saint was teaching at Bologna, a lay brother obtained leave from the Prior to take as companion the first religious brother whom he should find disengaged. Seeing St. Thomas, who was a stranger to him, walking up and down the cloister, he addressed himself to him, saying that the Prior wished him to accompany him through the city, where he had business to transact. The Saint, though suffering from lameness and perfectly aware that the lay brother was under some mistake, immediately obeyed the summons, and went limping through the city after his companion, who from time to time found fault with him for his slowness. When the lay brother discovered his mistake his apologies were profuse; but the Saint replied, "Don't be troubled, my dear brother; I am the one to blame. I am only sorry that I could not be more useful." To those who asked why he did not explain the mistake, he gave this golden answer: "Obedience is the perfection of the religious life; by it man submits to man for the love of God, as God rendered Himself obedient unto men for their salvation."

St. Thomas was very slow to believe evil of others; he always thought every one was better than himself;

but, when a fault was proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, he wept over it as though he had committed it himself; and his zeal demanded that it should be severely corrected, according to the saying of St. Augustine, "with charity towards the offender, and hatred against the sin."

One of the brethren once pressed him to say what he considered the greatest favour he had ever received from God, sanctifying grace of course excepted. After a few moments' reflection, he replied, "I think that of having understood whatever I have read." He remembered everything he had once heard, so that his mind was like a well-stocked library. He often wrote, dictating at the same time on other subjects to three or four secretaries, and never losing the thread of the arguments.

Of St. Thomas's manner of spending his day the following particulars have been preserved. After the short time absolutely necessary for sleep, he would rise in the night and come down to the church to pray, returning to his cell just before the bell rang for Matins, that his vigil might pass unnoticed. He would then go down again to office with the Community, often prolonging his prayer till daybreak. After preparing by penance, confession, and meditation, he celebrated the first Mass, and for his thanksgiving heard another Mass, which he often served. He had composed prayers for all his daily actions, some of which are still preserved. At the Elevation he was accustomed to repeat the words, "Thou, O Christ, art the King of Glory," with the remaining verses of the *Te Deum*. Although lawfully dispensed from attendance in choir by his duties of teaching and writing and by the numerous visits of those who sought his advice, he assisted with the rest of the Brethren at all the hours of the Divine Office, at which he often shed tears of devotion.

When his morning spiritual exercises were ended he gave his lectures on Theology or Holy Scripture, after which he returned to his cell and wrote or dictated till dinner-time. He ate but once in the day, and was per-

fectly indifferent to what was set before him. Indeed, in the refectory he was so absorbed in prayer and thought, as to become quite unconscious of external things, and his plate was often changed or his food taken away by the servers, without any notice on his part. After dinner he conversed for a short time with the brethren, and then refreshed his soul with a little spiritual reading, his favourite book being the Conferences of Cassian. After a short repose, he resumed his labours. Compline in choir with the chanting of the *Salve Regina* ended the day. The angelic doctor was full of childlike devotion to Our Blessed Lady. His confessor, Brother Reginald, declared that St. Thomas had never asked anything through Mary without obtaining it; and the Saint himself specially attributed to her intercession the grace of living and dying in the Dominican Order, according to his own earnest desire. During the whole of one Lent he preached on the words "Ave Maria," and the same cherished words are to be found in his own handwriting over and over again on the margin of an autograph copy of the "Summa against the Gentiles," recently discovered in Italy. On his death-bed he confided to Brother Reginald that Our Lady had appeared to him several times, and assured him of the good state of his soul and the solidity of his doctrine. The holy Apostles SS. Peter and Paul also favoured him with their visits, and explained to him difficult passages of Scripture. The Epistles of St. Paul were his favourite subjects of meditation, and he was accustomed to recommend them to others for the same purpose. He had a special devotion to St. Augustine, whose proper Office, still in use in the Dominican Order, he composed from the holy Doctor's works. St. Thomas used to wear round his neck a relic of the virgin martyr St. Agnes, of which he once made use to cure Brother Reginald of a fever which attacked him on a journey to Naples; and from that time we are told the holy Doctor resolved to celebrate the feast of St. Agnes with special solemnity, and, with a touch of nature that showed human sympathy in the midst of his abstract studies, to

have a better dinner provided in the refectory on that day.

"His marvellous science," says Brother Reginald, "was due far less to the power of his genius than to the efficacy of his prayer. Before studying, entering on a discussion, reading, writing, or dictating, he always gave himself to prayer. He prayed with tears to obtain from God the understanding of His mysteries, and abundant light was granted to his mind." If he met with a difficulty, he joined fasting and penance to his prayer, and all his doubts were dispelled. On one occasion St. Bonaventure, coming to visit him, saw an angel assisting him in his labours.

Among his remarkable sayings may be mentioned the answer he gave to his sister, when she asked him what she must do to become a saint. "*Velle*," he replied—*i.e.*, "Will it." Being asked what were the signs of the perfection of the soul, he replied: "If I saw a man fond of trifles in conversation, desirous of honour, and unwilling to be despised, I would not believe him perfect, even if I saw him work miracles."

IV.—His Death. Honours rendered him by the Church.

On the feast of St. Nicholas, December 6, 1273, St. Thomas was saying Mass in the chapel of the Saint in the Convent of Naples, when he received a revelation which so changed him that from that time he could neither write nor dictate. Shortly afterwards, in answer to Brother Reginald's pressing entreaties, he said to him: "The end of my labours is come. All that I have written appears to me as so much straw, after the things that have been revealed to me. I hope in the mercy of God that the end of my life may soon follow the end of my labours."

He was suffering from illness when he received a summons from the Pope to attend the General Council convoked at Lyons for the reunion of the Greek and Latin Churches. The Saint therefore started from

Naples, accompanied by Brother Reginald and some other friars, on the 28th January, A.D. 1274. On the way he was taken much worse. "If our Lord is about to visit me," he said to his companions, "it is better He should find me in a religious house than among seculars." As he was not within reach of a Dominican convent, he yielded to the pressing invitation of some Cistercian friends, and allowed them to carry him to their Abbey of Fossa Nuova. He went straight to the church to adore the Blessed Sacrament; and then, as he passed through the cloister, he exclaimed: "Here is the place of my rest for ever!" He was lodged in the Abbot's own room and waited upon with the utmost charity. The monks went themselves to the forest to cut wood for his fire; and on seeing them bringing a load into his chamber, the Saint cried out: "Whence is this, that the servants of God should thus serve a man like me, bringing such heavy burdens from a distance?" In compliance with the earnest entreaties of the Cistercians, he began to expound to them the Canticle of Canticles; but he did not live to complete his exposition. As his end approached, he with many tears made a general confession of his whole life to Brother Reginald, and then asked to be laid on ashes on the ground when the Holy Viaticum was brought to him. On beholding the Blessed Sacrament, he raised himself into a kneeling posture, and said in a clear and distinct voice, whilst the tears chased each other down his face: "I receive Thee, the price of my soul's ransom; I receive Thee, the Viaticum of my soul's pilgrimage; for whose love I have studied, watched and laboured, preached and taught. I have written much and have often disputed on the mysteries of Thy law, O my God; Thou knowest I have desired to teach nothing save what I have learnt from Thee. If what I have written be true, accept it as a homage to Thy Infinite Majesty; if it be false, pardon my ignorance. I consecrate all I have ever done to Thee, and submit all to the infallible judgment of Thy Holy Roman Church, in whose obedience I am about to depart this life." Just before receiving the Sacred

Host he uttered his favourite ejaculation: "Thou, O Christ, art the King of glory, Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father." After receiving the Holy Viaticum, he made fervent acts of faith and love in the words of his own beautiful *Adoro Te.* On the following day while receiving Extreme Unction, he calmly answered all the prayers, whilst the voices of the assistants were choked by their sobs. He tried to comfort his own Brethren, who were inconsolable at their approaching loss, and most gratefully thanked the Cistercians for their charity. One of them asked him what was the best way of living without offending God: "Be certain," replied the Saint, "that he who walks in the presence of God and is always ready to give Him an account of his actions, will never be separated from Him by sin." They were his last words. Shortly after he fell into his agony and peacefully expired, March 7, 1274, not having yet completed his fiftieth year.

On that same day Blessed Albert, then at Cologne, burst into tears in presence of the community, and exclaimed: "Brother Thomas Aquinas, my son in Christ, who was the light of the Church, is dead. God has revealed it to me."

At Naples too God was pleased to make known the death of the Saint in a miraculous manner. One of the friars, whilst praying in the church, fell into an ecstasy, in which he seemed to behold the holy Doctor teaching in the schools, surrounded by a vast multitude of disciples. St. Paul the Apostle then appeared, with a company of saints, and St. Thomas asked him if he had interpreted his Epistles rightly. "Yes," replied the Apostle, "as far as any one still in the flesh can understand them; but come with me; I will lead you to a place where you will have a clearer understanding of all things." The Apostle then seemed to lay his hand on St. Thomas's mantle and to lead him away; and the friar who beheld the vision startled the community by crying out three times in a loud voice: "Alas! alas! our Doctor is being taken away from us!"

St. Thomas's funeral was celebrated at the Abbey

with great solemnity. Brother Reginald made a short address, often interrupted by his own sobs and those of his hearers. He declared that, having been for many years St. Thomas's confessor, he could solemnly attest that the holy Doctor had never lost his baptismal innocence, and had died as pure and free from stain as a child of five years old. He then mentioned some particular favours which St. Thomas had forbidden him to reveal during his lifetime.

Several revelations of the Saint's glory were made after his death, of which the following is perhaps one of the most interesting. A fervent disciple of his prayed earnestly that he might know the rank to which his beloved master had been raised in glory. One day, as he was making his usual petition before the altar of Our Lady, two venerable personages, encompassed with a marvellous light, suddenly stood before him. One of them was arrayed as a Bishop; the other wore the habit of a Friar Preacher, but it was resplendent with precious stones; on his head was a crown of gold and diamonds; from his neck hung two chains of gold and silver; and an immense carbuncle, in the form of a sun, shone upon his breast, shedding forth rays of light all around. "God has heard your prayer," said the former; "I am Augustine, Doctor of the Church, sent to acquaint you with the glory of Thomas Aquinas, who reigns with me and who has illuminated the Church with his knowledge. This is signified by the precious stones with which he is covered. That which shines on his breast signifies the right intention with which he has defended the Faith; the others denote the books and writings he has composed. Thomas is my equal in glory: but he has surpassed me by the aureola of virginity."

St. Thomas was canonized by Pope John XXII. at Avignon, 1323. It was not until A.D. 1367 that the Dominicans succeeded in obtaining possession of his body, which they conveyed to their convent at Toulouse, where it was received with every demonstration of honour. An annual festival is kept by the Order on January 28th, in memory of this translation, which was

accompanied by many miracles. Valuable relics of the Saint have been given to various convents of the Order. At the time of the French Revolution the Saint's remains were removed to the crypt of the Church of St. Sernin at Toulouse, where they still repose.

In 1567 St. Pius V. conferred on St. Thomas the title of Doctor of the Church; and Pope Leo XIII., by a Brief of August 4, 1880, instituted him Patron of all Catholic universities, academies, colleges, and schools.

The Church and the Catacombs.

By B. F. C. Costelloe, M.A.

I have always felt that, difficult and fragmentary as are the indications that remain to us in the ruined catacombs which were the burial-places and at times the meeting places of the early Roman Church, those indications ought to throw considerable light, if they could be carefully studied, upon the faith and practice of the first ages. The circumstance that I have been led of late to consider the History of the Liturgy, brought me, as it were by chance, to re-consider some matters concerning the catacombs which had first been brought to my attention long ago. And when I was asked to lecture here,* I chose this subject, because I felt myself driven to this conclusion—that the more people know of the evidences which the catacombs contain, the more irresistibly will it be borne in upon their minds, that the Church of those who worshipped there was not merely a Catholic as contrasted with a Protestant Church, but contained even comparatively developed forms of distinctively Catholic thought and doctrine, to a degree one would hardly have thought possible beforehand.

Some will know what the catacombs are. But it is worth while, in order that the nature of the evidence may be understood, to set this forth a little more distinctly. The catacombs are a very extensive series of artificial galleries wrought in the soft stone strata round the city of Rome, containing a maze of passages and chambers, and lined throughout with tombs. The passages and the tombs are hewn in the rock. In the vast majority of cases, the tomb as soon as it was filled was closed, and upon the slab or other plaster covering there was inscribed the monumental inscription of the dead, pious references to our Lord, expressions of hope

* The lecture was originally delivered at St. George's, Southwark, in 1893, as one of a series of lectures to Protestants organized by the local branch of the Catholic Truth Society.

and assurance of the future life, and, frequently, significant symbols of different kinds by way of adornment. In these galleries there are all manner of chambers—sometimes of considerable size, and constructed with considerable architectural skill. Certain of these are covered—especially the earliest of them—with a fine stucco, and upon this are drawn fresco-paintings which, as it is now clear, were meant to be symbolical. Of some of them, no one who studies them with care can have any doubt that they are in the nature of a standing catechism of the Christian faith.

The name of the "catacombs" has itself a notable significance. It originally referred only to one burial-place, and its use was transferred to all others—much in the same way as the name of the hospital near this spot [Bethlem] was conferred upon all lunatic asylums. The reason was the same. It was because the original local "catacomb" was the most celebrated of all that its name became universal. It was the place where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul at one time rested, before they were taken to their ultimate destinations; and the resting-place of these Founders of the Roman Church became so famous as a place of pious pilgrimage, that its local name of "The Catacombs" was transferred to all other cemeteries of the like kind, not only in Rome, but in other parts of the world. I mention this in passing: but I ask you to note it as one of the many instances in the early history of the Christian cemeteries of that veneration for the relics of the saints which is (as all Protestants will agree) a sufficiently distinctive Catholic use.

I have spoken of the catacombs as Christian, but I ought to say at once that it was not the Christians who invented catacombs. Underground burial, in crypts of a similar kind, was not unknown even to the Romans; but those who especially constructed catacombs in Rome were the pre-Christian Jews. There are at present existing catacombs which probably date from before the Christian era, and which are clearly and distinctly Jewish. In these almost every inscription refers to 'the Synagogue,' and upon the slab, in very many cases indeed, there appears as a

symbol the seven-branched candlestick of the Temple. The usage, therefore, of placing symbols upon the Christian tombs was not a new invention, but was a continuation of an earlier tradition.

It used to be supposed that the catacombs had been constructed secretly and in the days of persecution. That is not so. They were originally ordinary cemeteries, such as might be constructed by all who preferred underground burial: and, as a rule, until about the year 250, the construction and use of the catacombs went forward in comparative peace, and to a certain extent under the protection of the law. That is the reason of the circumstance that all the catacombs, or almost all, lie within a ring of about two miles and a half outside the walls of the City. This was the area prescribed by law for burial, and within that area anybody who chose to dedicate a piece of ground for the purpose of sepulture was protected by the Roman law.

But although the first two centuries and a half were a time of comparative peace, I must not be supposed to say that there were no disasters to Christianity either above ground or under ground. Within that period there were several fierce spells of persecution, and not a few Christians were even martyred in the catacombs themselves. It is necessary always to remember that the catacombs of Rome were undoubtedly not places of burial only, but also, on occasion, places of religious worship. They were places in which the primitive Church could assemble together for that distinctive religious rite which we now call the Mass, but which in those days of secrecy they called "The Gathering."* Such celebrations undoubtedly took place at the tombs of those who had suffered for the Faith, and, for that reason, you will find that over the tombs of those who are most distinguished there are altar places—sometimes a square recess cut in the wall, later a recess with a flat slab but an arched top, which is technically called an 'arcosolium.' In both cases, as all the archæolo-

* Latin or Greek synonyms of various kinds, framed so as not to convey to the outer world the full meaning of the rite which they regarded as a mystery, but all carrying the same reference, hand on for us the tradition of that distinctive observance which is called in the Acts "the gathering together of the faithful for the breaking of the (Eucharistic) bread."

gists admit, this was a preparation made distinctly and specially for the celebration of the Eucharist upon the tomb of a saint.* Now I do not know how it may present itself to the Protestant mind. It is not easy for me, who have never been a Protestant, to understand how some of these things look to those who are outside. But I confess it seems to me, in the very threshold of the matter, a startling proposition that cemeteries which were deliberately prepared for the celebration of the Eucharist upon the tomb of a martyr, could be anything else but the memorials of a Catholic Church.

I say that there is no question that these places were designed for religious worship, and I go on to say that that proposition is not confined merely to the celebration of the Eucharist upon the tombs of the Saints. There are also in these underground structures larger chambers, in some of which it is said to be possible still to distinguish the very arrangements which were made for the gathering of the congregation, for the placing of the altar and the celebration of the rite. There is one of them—its date is not later than the year 250, and is at least possibly half a century earlier—in which there are to be seen still the four sockets for the pillars which supported an altar, that altar being, according to the use of the time, set out some little space from the back wall, in order that the 'Throne,' or as the Romans called it, 'the Cathedra,' of the Bishop who celebrated the Mass, might be placed behind it.

* St. Jerome mentions in detail how he when a boy at Rome (about A.D. 365) used to go with his companions on Sundays "to visit the tombs of the Apostles and martyrs . . . excavated in the bowels of the earth." And Prudentius, writing in the same generation, tells us in terms how "the same table of stone feeds us with the holy food of the Sacraments, and is also the safe keeper of the martyr's bones." There is every reason to believe that the custom which was then so well-known, had existed ever since there were martyrs to commemorate. There is direct evidence of such an event in A.D. 283–4, when a band of Christians, entering the catacomb with 'the sacred vessels' for this purpose, were walled up and buried alive. The Mass and martyrdom of Pope Sixtus in 258 is referred to later. As to the veneration of martyrs' relics, this is attested not only by the undoubted honours paid to the 'body of blessed Peter' ever since the end (at least) of the first century in his crypt on the Vatican, but equally, to cite another church, by the well-known case of the relics of St. Ignatius, from 116 A.D.

There are still more elaborate structures in other catacombs, but I will not discuss them with you now, because in some cases the identification or the date may be subject to doubt. There are actually monumental inscriptions to be found in the catacombs which relate how the Priests and the Bishops of the earliest Church were martyred in these catacombs in the act of saying Mass. There are two such cases at least preserved amongst the records of the catacombs that remain, and both of them refer to the events of a very early period of Christian history. The first of them is the case of the epitaph of one Alexander (not the Pope) who died, as his epitaph says, "as he was about to sacrifice to the true God." I do not think anyone, whatever his pre-conceptions may be, will say that the statement that a Roman priest was "about to sacrifice to the true God" can have reference to any other kind of sacrifice than that which has been recognized always in the Roman Church. And in the case of one of the Popes, Sixtus the Second, who was martyred in the catacomb of St. Praetextatus, in the year 258, the records* also state in graphic language how he was seized sitting upon his bishop's throne, and brought back to be beheaded at the same spot

I do not wish however to go into this matter at length. It would be impossible to deal with all the collateral branches of the subject, and it is necessary to restrict ourselves to something like a definite course of argument. I desire only at the moment to make it plain that there was an extensive series of structures of this kind which were in common and constant use by the Church down to about the year 250, subject to occasional bursts of persecution. In the year 257, an Imperial edict forbad the use of Christian crypts, and from that time began a worse period which lasted for about 50 years, and ended in the great Diocletian persecution, which may be dated, broadly speaking, after the year 300. During this half century, the then existing catacombs were constantly harried and were to a large extent destroyed. In some cases the galleries were absolutely

* See the Damasine inscription in Northcote and Brownlow's *Roma Sotteranea*, vol. i., p. 151, cf. p. 302.

filled with earth, whether by the enemy, or by friends eager to protect them from sacrilege, it is no longer possible to say. I mention it here merely in order to explain how it is that vast quantities of the monuments of the generations before the year 250 have necessarily been destroyed. After the triumph of Christianity in the reign of Constantine, not many years subsequent to the Diocletian terror, the catacombs were opened again, and at that time many fresh structures and further decorations, and consequently much destruction of the older monuments, undoubtedly took place. About the year 350 the use of the catacombs began to wane again; and Pope Damasus, whose pontificate extended from 356 to 384, proceeded to gather together the monuments of the ancient martyrs. He rebuilt their tombs; he set up new and more elaborate slabs commemorating their deaths and their burials, and, by his own reconstructions, he also helped unfortunately to destroy many of the more ancient monuments which would have been of great interest to us to-day.

At the same time, there lived a Christian poet, Prudentius, who also devoted much of his enthusiasm to the scenes and to the history of the catacombs, which were then undergoing as it were a revival. After that generation they fell into greater disuse. The sacred offices of the martyrs were carried on, with ampler room, in churches built above their graves, but sunk down to the old level through the solid rock. In the centuries that followed the catacombs were by degrees closed up, and the bodies of many of the saints and martyrs were taken away for devotional reasons by ecclesiastical authority to churches above ground. The subterranean burials ceased altogether about A.D. 410. In course of time, the barbarian invasions swept away all remembrance of this interesting series of underground monuments, and the knowledge of them was lost completely, until they were gradually re-discovered in modern times.

No one therefore must expect to find in the case of the catacombs anything like an elaborate or continuous series of records. As a matter of fact, there are very few of the sepulchral inscriptions which bear a fixed date.

The Christians of those times considered it of the greatest importance to recollect the *day* of the death of those for whom they cared, and particularly of the saints of the Church, because they assembled on that day for an anniversary service, as Catholics do to this day. But they did not care to mark the particular *year* in which they died, and therefore as regards the sepulchral inscriptions, it is not easy to say exactly to what date the great majority of the older series belonged. There are a certain number that are dated by the mention of the Consuls of the year, but these are not many or important. But by the diligence of many Roman archæologists, and by the researches of many others, both Protestant and Catholic, there has been a progressive re-discovery of the mural decorations of the catacombs, including both the symbols upon the tombs and the paintings upon the walls; and, as the science of archæology has advanced, it has been possible, to an extraordinary degree, to fix the actual dates of these symbols, either by the style of the painting, by the workmanship of the chambers and the stucco itself, or by other notes. In some cases it is possible to fix a date for passages and chambers in which particular frescoes are found, either from tombs which can be identified (such as those of the Popes), or by the aid of the tiles occasionally used in the construction of the more difficult parts of the galleries, which always bear the regnal stamp of the Imperial brickworks from which they came. There are, therefore, in spite of the absence of stated years, methods of great delicacy by which the dates of particular designs can be identified; and when I say that a particular painting is of a particular date, it will be understood that it is upon these indications that I am basing myself, although of course in a lecture like the present it is not possible to give in each case the exact train of reasoning by which a given result is found. This, however, is fortunately true,—that the two brothers De Rossi (who with their master and forerunner, the Padre Marchi, have done more than any others for the science of the catacombs), have been so peculiarly cautious and so scientifically conscientious in their

decisions upon these difficult points, that in the vast majority of instances their conclusions have been frankly admitted by competent Protestant critics, without any considerable controversy as regards the facts or dates.

Now my present purpose is to set before you, quite shortly and in a popular way, one or two of the broad results of this mass of evidences. I have said that the more one went on to consider the facts concerning the catacombs, the more startlingly Catholic they appeared to be. I confess to you, I was myself surprised by the extent and cogency of the evidence—surprised, because it is so obvious that immense quantities of material have been destroyed, and that the most valuable testimonies to the faith and practice of the ancient Church may still lie hidden under the earth, or may long since have gone to ruin.

I was surprised also for this reason—that as the use of the catacombs was pre-eminently connected with the burial of the dead, and as the representations of all kinds to be found in them are necessarily grouped round that point, there are obviously large sections of religious doctrine for which such a place affords no very natural opportunity. Take, for instance, what an ordinary Protestant would consider the two most salient and distinctive facts about the Catholic Church—the Mass on the one hand, and "Mariolatry" on the other. I do not think any one, if he addressed his mind to it beforehand, would expect to find any large amount of evidence concerning either the one or the other in a series of underground cemeteries for the burial of the Christian dead. Nevertheless, as I shall show in a moment, there is evidence of extraordinary weight and fulness that upon both the one point and upon the other the Church of the catacombs held not merely an essential but a strongly developed Catholic view. And there are a score of other points. Take, for instance, the question, much more disputed now-a-days than it was in the first centuries of the Church, concerning the special commission and primacy of Saint Peter, and the effect of that commission upon the whole practice and organization of the Church. It is a curious thing—I certainly should not have expected it, but it is the fact—that the symbolical pictures

of the catacombs preserve for us abundant indications of the strong affirmation by the Roman Church in the very first centuries of its existence, of that cardinal fact which it maintains to-day—that in the organization of the institution He left behind Him on earth, our Lord committed a special prerogative to Peter, and that it was through that prerogative and in connection with that jurisdiction that the ordinary dispensations of the Christian Church were to flow. I cannot go into it at length, but I will tell you in a word, and by way of illustration, what I mean.

Among the various symbolical representations of these chambers, there is one that constantly recurs. It is a representation, upon the face of it, of Moses striking the rock. Now it is clear, from the collocation in which this is placed, that it was to those early Christians a typical representation of the sacrament of baptism; and that the water which flows from the rock, is that spiritual water in which the Christian soul is born unto God; and that it is through that new birth that he becomes capable of the other sacraments, and in particular of the Eucharist, and through these of the great hope of the resurrection of the dead. Now the astonishing part of the matter is that the figure which is striking the rock can be identified by cogent evidence as being intended, not merely for Moses, but for Peter. That evidence is found in many ways. It is found, for one thing, in the series of gilded glasses, the dates of which are indeed not certain, but which form a chain extending very far back into the early centuries. In some of these you find the figure striking the rock, and you also find a name written over it; and the name is not Moses but Peter. It is a curious fact, that in these cases the figure striking the rock has a distinctive face. It is a significant circumstance —although people who have not studied the matter in detail may doubt it—that the Roman Church can be proved to have preserved from the very commencement two typical representations, one of which was the face and head of Peter, and the other was the face and head of Paul. The sarcophagi of the time of Constantine carry on the same tradition. To those acquainted with the

early archæology of the catacombs it is a proposition beyond question that you can take back that figure striking the rock to a very early date, with such concomitants as make it apparent that the figure in obedience to whose 'rod of power' come the waters of the Divine grace through the channels of the sacraments of the Christian Church, was no other than the Prince of the Apostles.*

That is one side point: I will give you another. If there was one point more discussed than another in the controversies between our friends the reformers and the professors of the orthodox Catholic faith, it was the respective value of faith and works. To listen to the heroes of the German Reformation, there was nothing more deleterious than to suggest that any Christian should lay claim to anything whatever in the nature of 'merits.' Now you may be surprised to hear it, but it is nevertheless true that one note which is constant in a mass of sepulchral inscriptions, even when they contain

* Dr Cutts, in the recently issued S.P.C.K. volume on *Early Christian Art*, singularly obscures the importance and early prevalence of this symbol. He speaks (p. 222-3) as if it were very difficult to see any meaning in it at all, and as if it were quite doubtful whether it referred to baptism. But he gives no reason for this curious dubiety, except that "that in all the baptisteries, including that in the Catacomb of Pontianus, the baptism of our Lord is always adopted as the appropriate symbol. He omits to add that such a scene of baptism is expressly bracketed with this symbol in the great sacramental series in San Callisto. The matter, in fact, is too plain for argument. He admits the indentification of the figure striking the rock with Peter: but he sets this aside by ascribing it airily to "some later examples," and by hinting that the reason for it was because Peter in the Acts is said to have bidden the Jewish converts to 'repent and be baptized,' and to have admitted the Gentile centurion to baptism. Mr. Cutts does not refer to the obvious Roman interpretation of the series of Rock symbols which is strongly pressed by De Rossi. He does not suggest how an Anglican might meet it, except by a discreet silence. As to the alleged "lateness" of the examples which identify St. Peter, there is no proof of it whatever. The examples of it which are found in the gilded glasses are to be dated somewhere in the third century. The portrait heads by which SS. Peter and Paul are there identified, are much more likely to be early than late, for the archetype, as seen in the beautiful medal found by Boldetti in the Catacomb of Domitilla, must be of second century work. The well-known portrait head of Pope Callistus, with his name, which corresponds

only half-a-dozen words, is the assertion that the Christian dead had "deserved well." It is quite true that the pagan inscriptions often used the same formula. But if the Christians of the catacombs had held the views of the Lutheran reform, they would hardly have continued to talk, as they did, of the 'merits' which the Christian had acquired in his life, and which he took with him in humble confidence before his God.

I might go on to other like points: but it is desirable, on an occasion like this, to restrict one's self to something clear and definite which a hearer can take away; and therefore I will go back to those two distinctive Catholic doctrines, which are, I suppose, more commonly thrown in our teeth by the world outside than any others—on the one hand, our startling doctrine of the Eucharist, and on the other hand, our veneration for the high place assigned to the Blessed Virgin in God's scheme of the redemption of the world, which Protestants are pleased to call Mariolatry. I will take the second first.

I suppose there are very few persons, even of those that suppose themselves to be extremely tolerant towards the Catholic view, who are not completely convinced that the high position assigned in modern times by Catholics to the Mother of God is a thing invented at the earliest in the 4th or 5th century. You will remember that there were controversies with Nestorius, and that there were Councils, and that there were discussions as to whether the phrase I have just used—

in style to these Petrine glasses, cannot well be placed much later than his death (in A.D. 222), since there is no reason to suppose that his portraiture would have been handed down through any interval of time. The identity of the figure at the Rock with Peter is so well settled with the sculptors of Christian sarcophagi, that they bring in the rock incident into a series of scenes from the life of the Apostle. This example is Constantinian, but it indicates tha. the tradition was then well-rooted. How old it really is, no one can pretend to say; but it is safe to say that it is certainly older than the Diocletian, and probably older than the Decian persecution. The fact is,that the whole body of the Petrine Tradition at Rome, as evidenced by the discoveries relating to the catacombs, is (to say the least) a singularly strong confirmation of this side of the teaching of the Catholic Church.

'the Mother of God'—was one which was exactly orthodox or not; into those points I have of course no intention of entering here, for they are written in the tables of ecclesiastical history. But the remarkable thing is, that the catacombs attest that from the very commencement of the Christian ages—I use the term advisedly—the Church at Rome had *always* assigned a remarkably high, a remarkably honourable, and a remarkably important place to the Mother of our Lord in the scheme of Christian salvation.

There is one catacomb which is perhaps more indisputably ancient than any of the rest. It is that of St. Priscilla. It has preserved to us a large series of mural paintings which are most remarkable in this—that the figure of our Lady constantly recurs in places of high honour, and recurs in such a fashion that, as I shall show you presently, the intention clearly was to make conspicuous her particular share in the Gospel story. I will come back presently to the date of that catacomb, but I will tell you first of some of the remarkable pictures it contains. When I was thinking over this matter, I discovered that the recent research of a learned German* had put together all the representations of our Lady which have been discovered in the catacombs, and he had found ninety-six of them. Many of these, being sculptures, are possibly of later date,—for most Christian sculpture is later than the commencment of the third century. But I took for my own guidance those which could be dated before the time of Constantine—before the time, that is, when the Church became an established religion, and during the period when according to all admission the early strength of the Apostolic tradition must have remained. It is from that collection and from that collection alone that I shall take the representations which I am about to describe to you. The reproductions have been made with German care and patience, and are perfectly trustworthy.

In the first place, there is a picture in a very early style of art which represents the Mother and Child

* Liell, *Darstellungen d. Heiligen Jungfrau Maria i.d. Katakomben.*—Freiburg, 1887.

seated. Above her head is a star. Upon the other side is a figure with a roll in one hand, clad in the philosopher's cloak, which at an early period appears to have been regarded in Rome as a priestly dress. This figure is pointing with its right hand to the group and to the star. There was at first some doubt as to what all this could mean. But practically all archæologists, including the Protestant ones, are now agreed that this represents the Mother of Christ and the Child, and the Prophet Isaiah prophesying the 'great light' that was to arise on the world in the Incarnation of the Son of God.

In reference, it may be, to that earliest representation —for it is the earliest—in its connection with the Star, we have next certain representations of what we call the Epiphany. There is a sketch in the catacomb of Priscilla, ascribed to the beginning of the second century, but unhappily much obscured in its details by time. But there is another in the catacomb of Domitilla, dating not long after 200 A.D., which is preserved in full detail. Our Lady is seated in gorgeous robes, with a purple edge—a high honour in Rome—upon her chair. That chair is a remarkable feature, because it is the same chair which I have just described as that in which the Bishop sat when he celebrated the Mass. It was, in fact, the distinctive prerogative of the Bishops of the early Church.* We may fairly say that to seat our Lady in that chair was, for the Church of Rome, to put her at least on a level with the Apostles. Upon either side are seen the Wise Men running to present their gifts; and the curious feature about the picture is this—that the Wise Men are not three, as the universal tradition has always supposed that they were, but *four*. And why are they four? The reason is patent. The picture fills up the whole of the transverse space between one long tomb above and another long tomb below. The designer of that picture, wishing to

* The tradition that our Lady should be so represented in a chair of the distinctive episcopal form, is not only constant in the catacombs from the earliest to the latest examples, but passed on into Byzantine and Italian art with little change, even when its significance was, no doubt, forgotten.

put Mary in the very central point of the whole panel, has placed her sitting and facing the spectator in the middle of his space; and so, in order to make his design consistent, he has put two Wise Men running from the East and two Wise Men running from the West. If he had wanted to find the simplest way in which to make it evident to later ages that he conceived the picture with a distinct reference to the veneration of the high office of the Mother of our Lord, I do not think he could have found a better.

It is a further curious fact that the representation of the Epiphany came to be a constant tradition in the Roman Church, and even in those representations of it which later became common,—in which (as in the earliest one) the three Magi are running from one side, and our Lady and the Child are seated on the other—there is preserved a distinct indication on the part of the artist that he desires to give her a high place, because in most of them he goes out of his way to represent that while she supports the Child with one hand, she holds out the other to welcome the Wise Men who are coming from the lands of the Gentiles.

Look at the significance of all this, in the place where it is found. The Epiphany was the first presentation of the salvation that came in Christ, to the Gentile world. Rome was the capital and the centre point of the Gentile world. It is curiously rare in the early catacombs to find any scenes of our Lord's life at all. When we find them, they have evidently not an historical, but a special symbolic or dogmatic purpose.* And when the Church of Rome represented, as a constant symbol in its tombs, the Epiphany, and accorded in that representation a high place to the Mother of our Lord, it was doing precisely what the Catholic Church has done ever since, —only it was doing it in its own pristine form, instead of the more elaborate, or, if you please, the more tawdry fashions, which later devotion has discovered.

* *E.g.*, the raising of Lazarus is evidently not a record of the miracle, but a sign of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The references to the marriage of Cana, or to the multiplication of the loaves and fishes are admittedly Eucharistic. But the whole number of such Gospel scenes is very small.

Even that is not all. You have only to pass on to another of the catacombs to find another devotional picture of the Madonna, still more like what you might find in a modern Catholic Church. In a fresco dating from about 300 A.D. you find that all the accessories have fallen away, and you have a representation, again with the chair, again with the purple border and all the other circumstances of high honour, but showing not the Epiphany, not any given scene at all, not even any reference to prophecy, but simply the great type of the Mother and the Child, held up, then as now, for the veneration and the honour of the faithful.

Again, as if to make it still more clear, you have, from the early part of the second century, in the catacomb of Priscilla, what is, I suppose, in our own century the distinctive ornament of Catholic churches,—with the addition in later times of a few high Anglican copies—you have actually a representation of the Annunciation. It is a curious representation. You see the Blessed Virgin, and again she is seated in the same chair. But this time she is waiting, and there comes in, with every circumstance of haste and importance, a young man. Now you must remember the Christians of the first centuries did not represent the angels with wings any more than the New Testament does. This young man is impressing upon her with outstretched finger some very important message that he has to give. And the archæologists again are agreed from all the circumstances and details of the painting—and when I say agreed, I mean Protestants as well as Catholics—that this is the earliest picture of that Annunciation, which has been commemorated, I suppose, in a large proportion of all the Catholic Churches that have been built since.

I join to this, as part of the same series, merely in re-affirmation of what I have already said, that, as you have in one of these representations of the Epiphany the device of placing our Lady in the position of high honour by increasing the number of the Magi to four, and placing two on each side, so, in another not much later—between 250 and 300—you have precisely the same device repeated, only with the variation that this

time the number is reduced to two, so that there is one upon the one side and one upon the other.

Now I have not given you nearly the whole of the series, but I am taking typical cases: and I say that this collection of "Mariolatrous" pictures is a very extraordinary thing to find, on any view, in such early cemeteries of the Christians as those of which I am speaking, But I said I would point out to you why the cemetery of Priscilla, in which some of these and many other representations of our Lady recur, is a witness of special and remarkable moment. No one knows precisely who the foundress of that catacomb was; but there is one thing known about her, and that is that she was a contemporary of the Apostles. It is now perfectly clear that in that cemetery there was the burial place of the family of the Senator Pudens, in whose house, as all the world knows,* Peter stayed. In that cemetery the daughters of Pudens were buried. In that cemetery there occur family and other names which connect you directly with that stock and with that time: and it is a fact practically as certain as anything in archæology can be, that the persons who erected and the persons who decorated that cemetery—the persons, by consequence, who put up these testimonies to the veneration in which they held the Mother of God—were if not the contemporaries of Peter and Paul themselves, certainly the contemporaries of those who had heard their teaching from their own lips.

But now, lest I should be led away by the interest of the subject, I must pass to the other branch of which I said I would speak, that is, the doctrine of the Mass. And again I venture to say that one thing of which the mural decorations of the catacombs are full is the doctrine of the Eucharist.

* It is hardly necessary now to refute the monstrous Protestant theory that Peter never was at Rome. The very argument on which Calvin originally based this perversion of history—the reference in 1 Peter, v. 13. to "the church which is in Babylon,"—is now admitted by all critics of any repute, Protestants and Agnostics included, to be itself the proof of the tradition. For 'Babylon,' in the Neronian days, was the Christian synonym for Rome, as the ultra-Protestants are quick to remember when they wish to make an abusive use of the Apocalypse.

There is another remarkable chamber in the subterranean city. It is called now the catacomb of Callisto. Callistus, as some of you may know, was a very early Pope who, before he rose to the Papal chair, had been the first deacon of Rome under Pope Zephyrinus.

One of the early Christian documents, the discoveries of which have been so plentiful within the last generation, and which have wrought so much confusion in the camp of German scepticism, is a fierce attack upon Callistus himself, and some of his contemporaries in the Roman Church—an attack written obviously by a partisan, and probably by a schismatic, who particularly detested the then occupant of the See of Rome. But like other attacks it has rendered considerable service to the cause that it impugned, because it has preserved this remarkable statement, that Pope Zephyrinus, who lived before the end of the second century, "appointed his deacon Callistus over *the cemetery*" and set him to organize it. From this we know that there existed* in the last quarter of the second century a public

* Dr. Cutts in the volume referred to, makes the misleading assertion (at p. 120), that "the first public cemetery which belonged to the Roman Church as a corporate body was a considerable area on the Appian Way *obtained by the Pope Zephyrinus at the beginning of the third century.*" The passage of the Philosophumena, on which alone this assertion can be based, implies, on the contrary, that this catacomb was in existence and was '*the* cemetery' of the Roman Church, before that Pope specially appointed his deacon Callistus as its administrator; and the dated bricks leave no doubt that a certain trial passage was built in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180). The dedication of the area to the purposes of Christian burial must have been long prior to the attempt to enlarge it by the trial gallery in question, which may be naturally referred to the persecution that began in A.D. 161. All this any one may see by a careful perusal of Northcote and Brownlow's excellent summary of De Rossi's most scientific demonstration (in Bk. v. ch. ii. 2nd ed. v. i. p. 397-404). The date of the appointment of Callistus over it is said to be A.D. 127. Since St. Zephyrinus and the succeeding Popes (excepting by chance Callistus himself) were buried here in a special crypt, it is probable that the appointment mentioned in the Philosophumena was connected with a decision to transfer the official 'memoria' of the Popes from the Vatican to this spot, which had apparently already become by that date the most important of the Christian cemeteries. Some of the texts of the 'Liber Pontificalis,' which

cemetery belonging to the Christians of Rome, and already of sufficient extent and importance to make it worth while that the first deacon, practically the business chief of the whole community, should be placed in special control of it by the Pope. That cemetery is undoubtedly the one which was re-discovered and described by De Rossi a few years ago. How long it had existed before the time of Zephyrinus, it is not possible exactly to say: but certain of the dated tiles of which I spoke carry the date of the foundation of it certainly much further back, beyond the time in fact of the Emperor Commodus, whose accession was in 180 A.D.

In one of the entrances to that cemetery there are a series of chambers of peculiarly beautiful construction. They are overlaid with exceedingly fine stucco. They are painted by a person with considerable originality and some pretension, in his rough way, to expressive style. They are not as early as the great picture of our Lady

preserves (as is well known) items of very important evidence in such matters, state of Pope Anicetus (A. D. 150–162) and Pope Soter (162–171), that each was '*sepultes in cæmeterio Callixti Via Appia.*' Other texts say '*in Vaticano.*' The latter is preferred by De Rossi: but it is very possible that the variant reading is merely a confusion, and that the original text was '*fecit cæmeterium Callixti Via Appia sepultus est in Vaticano.*' A later editor, who did not know that the cemetery was really older than the man whose name was connected with the most splendid part of it, would suppose this to be a blunder; though to us it is, in view of the brick dates, almost mathematically demonstrable that, whether Anicetus began them or not, the earlier structures of the area, including the Chapels of the Sacraments referred to in the lecture, were in existence in his time. It may be added that, in any case, this was not the first cemetery which belonged to the Church in its corporate capacity: for it is abundantly clear that the 'memoria' of St. Peter in the Vatican crypt had been from the first an official place of underground burial for the Popes. There is no reason to doubt the express statement of the Liber Pontificalis that the successor of Clement 'constructed' there a burial chamber: and a tombstone bearing the name of 'Linus' was found on the spot. (Roma Sotteranea, vol. I., p. 113–4.) The common formula of the Liber Pontificalis for the fourteen successors of St. Peter, down to Zephyrinus, is a notable testimony to the strong Petrine tradition of the Roman Church. It states, apparently from ancient and authentic records, in each case the mode of burial, and the common form is '*sepultus juxta corpus Beati Petri in Vaticano.*'

and the prophet Isaiah, which, according to its style, is dated by most of the authorities actually within the first century. The present series of pictures is clearly not in the first century, but it belongs to somewhere in the second century, possibly in the middle, possibly in the later half. They date in any case, from the first beginnings of the catacomb: and that, as we have seen, may be put on a moderate estimate about 160 A.D. Now what did these pictures represent? There are a series of chambers, one after the other, which repeat with variations the same theme. It is what I called, a short while ago, a kind of pictorial catechism of the Christian Faith, as they thought of it in the second century. You have at the commencement the figure striking the rock. You have the waters of Baptism flowing from the rock. You have a Christian soul represented curiously as a little fish which is being found in the waters of Baptism by one of the "fishers of men." A little further on you have the actual ceremony of Baptism, as the door by which the catechumens were received into the fellowship of the Church, and were admitted for the first time to the celebration of the Eucharist itself. Immediately after this Baptism, accordingly, there follows a Eucharistic representation. I will tell you simply what it is. A man, clad in that same philosophic or priestly cloak which characterized the figure of Isaiah, is standing by a table with three legs—which, as we otherwise know, was a form of portable altar used by the early Church. On the other side of the altar is to be seen a female figure veiled, with her hands raised in prayer. Upon the altar-table is a fish, and beside the fish a number of breads. Each of these, in this and in every other case in which I shall mention them, seems to be marked with a cross. And the Priest—for it is no other—standing opposite the altar, is quite obviously represented as extending his hand over these breads, as in the act of consecration. In one of the parallel series the import of this is again made clearer by the fact that you have the faithful sitting down to the heavenly banquet, and that banquet, be it noted, is *not* the love-feast, which is represented in other parts of the

catacombs—while in front of those who sit at the banquet, there are again (as in various other pictures which I have not time to refer you to) a row of baskets filled with these same breads. These, I take it, are evidently a reminiscence of the 'seven baskets' that remained after the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. Finally, on the following wall, there are the symbols of that resurrection of the dead, for which the Christians looked, as the result through Baptism of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

What I want, then, to point out to you is, first of all, that you have here a remarkable indication of the actual celebration of a primitive Mass. It is roughly and figuratively represented, it is true, but then you must remember that the actual doctrine of the Eucharist was a mystery to which not even the catechumens themselves were admitted till their baptism; and, therefore, it could not be with greater distinctness pourtrayed upon an almost public wall.

But there is something still more startling. A very curious detail is testified to by these pictures, in which the Hosts of the primitive Church are shown. I have told you that they are constantly marked with a cross. What is that cross? It is not merely the Cross of Calvary, although it is that too. The representation, as every Catholic here will realise before I say it—the representation upon the Host of the Cross of Calvary, has always been meant to be a symbol in the Church of its tremendous doctrine, that, the sacrifice of the Mass as our Lord instituted it, is in fact a real, though a strange and inscrutable renewal of His own sacrifice at His death. Yet the cross-mark of the catacombs is not merely that, though that itself would be sufficiently startling. I feel no hesitation in saying that the presence of that Cross upon a series of the representations of the Eucharistic bread in the catecombs goes further, and testifies actually to the antiquity of a minute incident of the ritual of the Mass, as we have it to-day, and as every other rite throughout the Catholic world has it too.

You are aware, of course, that there are many ways of celebrating the Mass, which, in the judgment of the

Roman Communion, are quite equally valid and proper; and that some half-a-dozen of the great chains of liturgical tradition go back by different lines to the earliest, perhaps to Apostolic times. Now in every one of these usages there is a detail which is called the 'fraction of the Host': that is to say, at a certain point of the liturgy, after the consecration, it becomes the duty of the Priest to take the sacred Host in his hands and to break it into a certain number of parts. That usage is constant in every liturgy; and in every liturgy it has a singular importance—so much so, that in some of them, as in the ancient liturgy of Spain, it has been expanded into almost fanciful elaboration. In all, the fraction of the Host is an essential part of the symbolical ceremonial, and it is so because it is intended and has always been intended to have reference to the 'Body which was broken' for us, and because this very action, by our Lord, is commemorated in the words of institution themselves.

Now the most primitive usage of the fraction of the Host, as not only the Western but the Eastern Church bears testimony, was that in preparing the Hosts for the sacred service, they were marked with a cross, and in that form they were broken. And those who are most familiar with the catacomb pictures will be the first to agree that I am stating to you the sober truth when I say that there is good reason to believe that these representations bear witness to the fact that the Priest who was consecrating the sacred bread upon that portable table in the catacomb of San Callisto was in the habit of using a rite which, even in such a detail as this, corresponded with the ceremonial which is followed every Sunday now. You will not misunderstand me. I do not mean, of course, that in every detail it was the same. But that in a variety even of small details it was the same,* is an extraordinary and a startling fact.

It is impossible for a moment to attempt to do justice to the detail which crowds upon one's memory when

* A number of the older catacomb tombstones preserve the well-known words "Pax Tecum," probably also in remembrance of the formula of the Kiss of Peace.

one talks of these things: but, before I close I must explain to you what I meant when I said that upon that altar of the catacombs there was laid beside the bread a fish. The collocation of the fish and the bread in these Eucharistic representations is constant. In one of the rough inscriptions upon a grave-stone there are two fishes on either side, and each of them bears in his mouth a bread; there is a chain, making seven in all, of these breads passing from one to the other, and on every one of those breads there is also marked that very same cross of which I have spoken. Now what means this collocation of the fish with the bread?

Before I explain this to you I will describe yet one more of these Eucharistic symbols. Twice, in one of the most ancient crypts, they represent a river of flowing water. It is the same water as fell from the rock of Baptism. Upon the water there is seen the fish swimming. The back is bent hollow, and borne upon it there is a basket, made, apparently—because the whole thing is coloured and done in minute detail,—of osier twigs. Upon the top of that basket, there are a number of the same marked breads: and, in the centre of the basket there is a kind of window or transparent space, filled in with a patch of red colour, which you may interpret, if you please, as red wine or as blood. Now that symbol by itself might have seemed unintelligible, but a passage of St. Jerome, who himself was familiar with these catacombs, and who lived not too long after that sign was painted, explains it to the letter. He is talking of a Bishop of his time, who had had large means but who had made himself a pauper by his charity to the poor; and St. Jerome, suddenly digressing, says "But I for my part know of nothing that can be called more rich than a man who carries the Body of the Lord in a basket of twigs and His Blood in a chalice of glass." It was this apparatus which was used by the poorer parishes in Rome and elsewhere to send the Eucharistic elements from the parent parish church, either to other minor churches, or to those of the faithful who might be sick. That fish, therefore, which is passing over the waters of Baptism, simply means, in the language of the catacombs, our Lord

Himself carrying, through the channels of the sacrament, His Body and Blood to the faithful.

Do you ask why I say that the fish is our Lord? Some of you, no doubt, will know the reason why. For those who do not, I will explain. The fish is one of those semicryptic symbols which the Church then used, to hide the mysteries it cared for so dearly, from the eyes of those who would only blaspheme. They chose the fish as a kind of acrostic, because the Greek word which signifies a fish contains five Greek letters, and each of those five letters is the initial of a word, and those five words read thus: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour." Therefore, whenever you find the fish in that collocation in the catacombs, it was this idea that the Christians read: and when they put the fish upon that altar-table or elsewhere along with the sacramental bread, they meant to say exactly what we say—that in the Mass the two things become the same. Indeed, I do not hesitate to say that the true symbolism of these same acrostic pictures—frankly and simply read, say by some sceptic who believes nothing of Christianity at all—imports not only that these Christians celebrated the Mass; not only that they believed in the Sacraments; not only that they believed in the Real Presence of our Lord; but that they held a body of doctrine so minutely and particularly identical with that which is the orthodox doctrine of Catholicism to-day, that we may well claim that the preservation of these long buried records was a special Providence of God. Certainly none of those who saw the martyrdom of Peter and of Paul and prayed before their tombs in this same city of the dead, could ever in their wildest imaginations have supposed that the eyes of our latter day would find upon these mouldering walls so accurate, and to the candid student so unimpeachable a record of the faith once delivered to the Apostles, and by them to the Church of Rome.

There are, as all students know, two remarkable early Christian epitaphs—that of the much-travelled Bishop Abercius, and that of a Christian lad at Autun—in which this symbol of the fish is explained in full, and in an undoubtedly Eucharistic sense. The date of the visit of Abercius to Rome was about A.D. 200. The

other epitaph is somewhat later; but it is interesting also because of its reference to prayers for the dead, and, indeed, to the 'memento of the dead' at Mass. But it is unnecessary to urge these collateral proofs. The memorials of the catacombs, fairly interpreted, tell their own story, and it is clearly the story of a Catholic Faith.

I will take only the three salient points that I have dealt with. We have the frequent recurrence of the Eucharist in various forms, and particularly as the Bread marked with the cross for breaking; and we have this carried back at least to 175 A.D. How much further the lost evidences might take us, we know not, but even the date given is early enough for most people. We have the constant recurrence in some of the earliest of all the catacombs of representations giving high and significant honour to our Lady. Some of these pictures, as it happens, are among the oldest of those extant, and must have been seen, if not designed, by the converts of Peter and Paul. And we have, as the settled 'hieroglyph' for Baptism, the symbol of the Patriarch striking the rock, in which the designers frequently go out of their way to indicate that the Patriarch was to be understood as Peter. The symbol we can trace also to A.D. 175, and there is no reason to suppose the personal identification a later idea. Finally, we have the palpable and omnipresent fact that from the first the catacombs implied a reverent communion with the saintly dead, and that their tombs were used as the altars of an anniversary celebration of the Christian rite. If these things be true, or anything like the truth, is it not obvious that those who followed close on the Apostles and their pupils, and who lived in the early days of the Martyrs, before either the Diocletian storms or the Constantinian peace, professed, in a very well-developed form, what we now rejoice to call the Catholic and Apostolic Faith?

THE MYTH

OF THE

WALLED-UP NUN.

BY THE
REV. HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

In a pamphlet published by the Catholic Truth Society, in 1892, under the title of *The Immuring of Nuns*, the oft-repeated calumny—that nuns who proved unfaithful to their vows were put to death by being built up living into a niche in the wall—has been discussed at length. The writer of that pamphlet was not so foolish as to suppose that a belief, dear to the heart of every true Protestant, could be destroyed by any force of reasoning or any evidence of facts. Still he ventured to express a conviction that the fable was sinking gradually lower in the scale of respectability, and that the time was not far distant when it would no longer be heard of outside the precincts of Exeter Hall and the meetings of the Protestant Alliance. Prejudice, however, dies hard, and that favourable anticipation has not been justified by the event. During the autumn of 1893 one of the most popular novelists of the day lent his name to a singularly gross and offensive repetition of the libel in question. Seeing that the writer commands a large public, and that it is his pleasant conceit to pose as a man of erudition and a serious student of history, his attack may be considered of sufficient importance to warrant our returning to the subject.

And here it may not be out of place to remark how very patiently, not to say tamely, the Catholic body are content to sit down under so exasperating a calumny. The story which contains it has appeared in one of our leading illustrated newspapers, and is thus spread broadcast over the United Kingdom, and indeed wher-

ever the English language is spoken. There must, no doubt, be many Catholics connected with the publishing offices of *The Graphic*, and there must be thousands of Catholic households into which it finds its way, yet the proprietors apparently have no fear that they will injure their pockets in any way by the publication of this scandalous travesty of history. Whether it be Christian meekness, or whether it be silent contempt, or whether it be the apathy which results from disregarded protests, there is no probability that Catholics will be roused to take serious action of any kind. But one cannot at the same time help reflecting that a less indifferent attitude seems somehow more successful in making itself respected. The Jewish community in England are numerically a mere handful as compared with the adherents of the Catholic Church. Yet no journal with a circulation to lose would accept a novel which contained, as one of its leading incidents, a highly-coloured description of the crucifixion of a Christian child in a Jewish synagogue, together with the public avowal of the author's belief in the reality of these occurrences. If any newspaper were so venturesome, machinery would assuredly be set in motion to make the proprietors repent their rashness.*

I am not in the least concerned here either to affirm or to deny the truth of the alleged Jewish practice of immolating Christian children. Probably nine Englishmen out of ten regard it as a fable. But this may be said with confidence, that the evidence for the Jewish murder of Christian children is simply overwhelming beside any evidence which ever has been adduced or is ever likely to be adduced for the walling-up of nuns. In the former case we have at least full details of names,

* One need not have the least sympathy for the ridiculous exaggerations of Drumont's *France Juive* to be conscious that Jewish influence even in literary matters is a factor not to be neglected. Any one who may have followed in the pages of *The Athenæum* the correspondence which attended the publication of the second edition of the late Mr. King's *Gnostics and their Remains* some years since, will understand what I mean.

place, and time, we have judicial inquiries, we have the record of contemporary documents, we have the testimony of witnesses on oath.* In the case of the Religious no one pretends to tell us either who, or when, or where. The monastic chronicles themselves are silent, no trace remains in the *comperta* of episcopal visitations, no statutes are quoted from the constitutions of an Order enjoining such a penalty. The boldest attempts to justify the charge do not go beyond a vain appeal to tradition, or the ill-attested discovery of human remains in the walls of some ruined religious building.

But to return to the subject more immediately under discussion. The name of Mr. Rider Haggard will be familiar to most of my readers, as that of a writer of fiction who a few years since achieved a sudden reputation in a somewhat new province of his art. Opinions may differ considerably as to the literary merit of the work he has produced, but his books, though declining in popularity, are still widely read. Mr. Rider Haggard, it would appear, chafes a great deal under the restrictions imposed upon the novelist by English respectabitity Being thus limited, as the Schoolmen say, *intensivè* in depth of passion, he seems to have sought consolation *extensivè* in width of range. He has surveyed mankind from China to Peru, at one time unveiling the mysteries of the South African continent, at another depicting contemporary society in England and in the colonies, at another projecting himself into the life of ancient Egypt at the voluptuous court of Queen Cleopatra. For his last excursion Mr. Rider Haggard has chosen a new scene and a new period. He has elected to make his readers acquainted with the condition of Mexico, social, political, and religious in the latter half of the sixteenth century. His novel under the title of *Montezuma's Daughter* ran its course in *The Graphic* in the latter half of 1893, and has since been published in book form by Messrs. Longmans.

* It would be useless to give references. Some idea of the bibliography of the subject may be obtained from Dr. Jessopp's article in the *Nineteenth Century* for May, 1893, on St. William of Norwich.

It will not be necessary to follow Mr. Rider Haggard through the various incidents of this unwholesome story. From every point of view it presents abundant matter for criticism, of which, to say the truth, the reviewers have not been slow to avail themselves, but my present attack is directed against the atrocious invention which forms the subject of its ninth and tenth chapters. The hero of the story, Thomas Wingfield, following for the time being the profession of a physician in Seville, receives one night a mysterious lady visitor. She is wrapped in a dark cloak, which after some hesitation she draws aside, "revealing the robes of a nun."

"Listen," she said, "I must do many a penance for this night's work, and very hardly have I won leave to come hither upon an errand of mercy."

The errand of mercy is to procure "a poison of the deadliest," the purpose of which his visitor thus explains.

"In our convent there dies to-night a woman young and fair, almost a girl indeed, who has broken the vows she took. She dies to-night with her babe—thus, oh God, thus! by being built alive into the foundations of the house she has disgraced. It is the judgement that has been passed upon her, judgement without forgiveness and without reprieve. I am the abbess of this convent—ask not its name or mine—and I love this sinner as though she were my daughter. I have obtained this much of mercy for her because of my faithful services to the Church and by secret influence, that, when I give her the cup of water before the work is done, I may mix poison with it and touch the lips of the babe with poison, so that their end is swift. I may do this and yet have no sin upon my soul. I have my pardon under seal. Help me, then, to be an innocent murderess, and save the sinner from her last agonies on earth."

It is hardly worth while to enter further into the preposterous details of this interview. The victim has been condemned to death by those in the Church "whose names are too high to be spoken," but a certain mitigation, *i.e.*, the poison already referred to, has been permitted by them, and it is superintended by "a tall priest whose face I could not see, for he was dressed in the white robe and hood of the Dominicans that left nothing visible except his eyes"! Then there is a

highly sensational description of the closing scene, in which there are "mason monks" mixing a heap of steaming lime, a niche "in the thickness of the wall shaped like a coffin set upon its smaller end," a procession of eight veiled nuns chanting "a Latin hymn for the dying," the erring Sister herself "wrapped in grave-clothes over which her black hair streamed"—the raven tresses were to be expected of course as an artistic necessity, but they must have grown very rapidly since the lady's profession a short time previously—and finally, in addition to the Dominican mentioned above, a black-robed priest, "with a thin half-frenzied face," bearing a crucifix. All this is very harrowing, and it is quite a relief to know that, as the police reports say, the prisoner was accommodated with a chair.

The dread rites proceed, and Mr. Rider Haggard is even kind enough to supply a kind of liturgical formula for the function. "You are doomed," says the Dominican, rehearsing the sentence which had been previously passed upon her, "to be left alone with God and the child of your sin, that He may deal with you as He sees fit."

But the reader will have had enough of this. I will only inflict upon him one more incident, from the gross offensiveness of which even Mr. Charles Kingsley would have shrunk.

> Then the black-robed, keen-eyed priest came to her, and holding the cross before her face, began to mutter I know not what. But she rose from the chair, and thrust the crucifix aside.
>
> "Peace!" she said. "I will not be shriven by such as you. I take my sins to God and not to you—you who do murder in the name of Christ."
>
> The fanatic heard and a fury took him.
>
> "Then go unshriven down to hell, you———!" and he named her by ill names and struck her in the face with the ivory crucifix.

Really Mr, Rider Haggard has missed his vocation. As a writer of transpontine melodrama of the "unhand me, ruffian!" type, he would have achieved even greater things than as a novelist.

At the foot of the page upon which all this is found there is appended a note in the following terms:

> Lest such cruelty should seem impossible and unprecedented, the writer may mention that in the museum of the city of Mexico he has seen the desiccated body of a young woman which was found immured in the walls of a religious building. With it is the body of an infant. Although the exact cause of her execution remains a matter of conjecture, there can be no doubt as to the manner of her death, for, in addition to other evidences, the marks of the rope with which her limbs were bound in life are still distinctly visible. Such in those days were the mercies of religion!

Shortly after the appearance of this instalment of the story, Mr. James Britten, the Honorary Secretary of Catholic Truth Society, addressed to the office of *The Graphic* a letter of remonstrance. The letter having been forwarded to Mr. Rider Haggard, elicited in due time a reply from that gentleman.

Nothing, he declared, would grieve him more than to give pain to any member of the Roman Catholic faith, but the cruelty of the Inquisition was notorious, and the immuring of nuns in the middle ages was a fact which till then he had never heard disputed. Further, Mr. Haggard adduces, in addition to the Mexican instance referred to in his footnote, first a house near Waltham Cross, formerly a religious building, where skeletons had been found walled-up; secondly, the Coldingham case, cited in the notes to *Marmion*; and thirdly, the case of the Abbot of Clairvaux, fined by the Parliament of Paris "for causing the death of a prisoner in an *in pace*."

In answer to this Mr. Britten again wrote, forwarding a copy of the pamphlet on *The Immuring of Nuns* by the writer of this paper, as well as a similar essay on *The Spanish Inquisition* by the Rev. Sydney F. Smith. These papers, upon Mr. Britten's renewed instances, were tardily acknowledged, but Mr. Rider Haggard, while admitting that such cases of immuring were perhaps rarer than he had supposed, reaffirmed his former allegations, laying stress particularly upon the skeletons he had seen in Mexico, and the verdict of the Parlia-

ment of Paris. Since then the novel has been republished in book form without any modification, just as it stood in *The Graphic*.

Now it is very desirable that the reader should have clearly before his mind the precise question in dispute. Mr. Rider Haggard has formulated against the Religious Orders of the Catholic Church a definite charge of walling-up alive offenders against their statutes. He does not merely accuse them of treating with cruelty the prisoners in their punishment cells. No one denies that there were such cells for the confinement of refractory monks and nuns. Neither does he content himself with the statement that these prisoners were sometimes immured for life in dungeons, the entrance of which was partially closed with masonry. This would be a comparatively pardonable inference from certain expressions found in monastic statutes and ancient records, though I must protest, as the result of a tolerably thorough examination of the question, that I have not yet seen any satisfactory evidence for the belief that either monks or nuns or prisoners of the Inquisition were ever really *walled-up*. But the charge which Mr. Rider Haggard does make is that Religious Superiors, whether of monks or nuns, were in the habit of inflicting capital punishment upon their subjects by a death of peculiar atrocity, building them up into a coffin-shaped niche, where life must have been extinct from suffocation in the course of a few hours at furthest.

Now it will not be expected that I should repeat here *da capo* the examination of the general question already undertaken in my former paper. To any one who honestly looks into the matter it will be clear that no statutes of any Religious Order have yet been brought forward which prescribe such a punishment, that no contemporary records speak of its infliction, that no attempt is made to give details of person or time, that the few traditions which speak of the discovery of walled-up remains crumble away the moment they are examined, that the growth of the tradition itself can be abundantly accounted for, that the few historians or

antiquaries of repute, whether Catholic or Protestant, who have looked into the matter, either avowedly disbelieve the calumny or studiously refrain from repeating it.* Hence, though Mr. Rider Haggard may in the first instance have been misled by common report, still, if now, after the evidence was laid before him, he has reprinted his book without correction or modification, he himself ought to be prepared to substantiate his charges. Let us see how utterly inadequate is the evidence he adduces for such a monstrous accusation.

And first of all, we may consider what this writer professes to have seen in the Museum of Mexico—the desiccated remains of a woman and her infant "found immured in the walls of a religious building." I have written to a friend in Mexico asking for information, but unfortunately my inquiry has not as yet met with an answer.† It is one of the iniquities of such libels as that we are discussing, that even though the falsehood be patent, almost infinite trouble must be gone through before the lie can be successfully unravelled. If some malicious enemy of religion chooses to show a heap of children's bones to an English traveller, and

* I may note as especially significant the silence of such a writer as Hubert Howe Bancroft. He has written six great volumes upon the *History of Mexico*, as well as four similar volumes largely taken up with its *Antiquities*. He manifests throughout a strongly hostile spirit towards the Church and all things Catholic. Yet he has not a word to countenance the idea that Religious or the Inquisition ever walled-up offenders alive. In vol. iii. p. 700, note, he quotes Zamacois for the statement that only nine persons were burnt alive by the Mexican Inquisition during the 249 years of its existence. On the other hand, writers like Dr. Grattan Guinness, *City of the Seven Hills*, p. 300, pretend that over *two hundred* victims were built up in the Inquisition building at Puebla alone. This ridiculous story is contradicted in the most formal manner by the archæologist, Señor Agreda, the present Director of the National Museum in Mexico. The remains discovered there and in the convent of Santo Domingo, were simply those of the monks who had been buried in a crypt below and behind the High Altar. See letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette* for Jan. 25th, 1894.

† Since the above was written, I have received replies of the most conclusive and satisfactory character, not only from the friend referred to, but from another acquaintance resident for many years in Mexico and now living in Spain. See footnote, p. 9 and 22.

tells him that these are the bones of infants made away with by the nuns of a convent in some far-off town of South America, what, I may ask, can be done to answer him? You may write to the place in question, if you are fortunate enough to know any one there to whom you can address a letter. If, again, it should happen that your friend can afford to devote time to the inquiry, if he should chance to be a man who is able and willing to make such an investigation, he may go about, he may inquire here and there, and examine such records as are accessible; and even then, after endless trouble, the sum-total of his report will be that he has *not* found any justification for the statement which has been made. For this reason it seems to me that we are warranted in treating all such appeals to what has been seen or done in a country like Mexico, as mere cowardly slander, until the facts alleged can be authenticated in such a way that investigation is rendered possible. If Mr. Rider Haggard had given his readers an extract from the official catalogue of the Museum of Mexico in the original Spanish, or if he had named the authority who vouches for the discovery of the remains, he would at least have done something to shift the responsibility of the libel from off his own shoulders; as it is, it is to him we look for an answer. Now let me set down in brief a few of the points upon which we may reasonably require to be assured, before that which Mr. Haggard alleges he saw in the Museum of Mexico can come into court at all as evidence for the prosecution. Mr. Haggard's bare word cannot give credit to such an improbable tale, while we lack:*

* The suggestions which I have here offered in explanation of what Mr. Rider Haggard averred he saw in the Museum of Mexico are now superfluous, for the matter is cleared up. There are undoubtedly two if not three desiccated bodies exhibited in that museum, and if any words of mine seem to imply that Mr. Rider Haggard is drawing entirely upon his imagination in what he describes, I am happy to withdraw them. On the other hand, concerning the nature of these remains, my Mexican friend made inquiries of the Director of the Museum, Señor Agreda, and received, from him the following information, afterwards published

*

(1) Proof that Mr. Rider Haggard's memory or imagination is not playing him tricks; in other words, proof that the remains were really there and have been seen by other travellers besides himself.

(2) Proof that Mr. Haggard's knowledge of the language is such as to secure him from misunderstanding his informant, or the ticket which described the nature of these remains. One cannot easily forget Cardinal Newman's story, in his *Present Position of Catholics* of the clergyman who vowed he had seen a price-list of sins in the Cathedral at Brussels. On inquiry, it turned out to be a list of the charges made for the use of chairs.

(3) Proof that, supposing the remains are really there and really profess to be what Mr. Rider Haggard alleges, they were ever found in the wall of a religious building, and that they have not been picked up in an old curiosity shop and ticketed, upon mere conjecture, by the malicious anti-clericalism of some museum official.

(4) Or proof that, granting the bodies were found immured in "a religious building," as the note states, this religious building was a Christian convent, and not an Aztec edifice dating from before the conquest.

Lest this suggestion may seem extravagant, let me explain that there existed an institution in ancient Mexico very similar to that of the Vestal Virgins in Rome. "Young girls," says one of the highest authorities on Mexican antiquities, "devoted themselves by vow to a life of penance or continence for one or more years. They were called Cihuatlamacazque

at length in a leading Mexican daily newspaper, *El Tiempo*, March 6th, 1894.

1. That "there is no foundation at all" for Mr. Rider Haggard's statement identifying any desiccated body in the Museum with that of an immured nun.

2. That the remains "are kept only to illustrate the phenomenon common and well known in Mexico—namely, the preserving influence of the climate on dead bodies."

3. That these and some other remains preserved there "were found in the common cemeteries of San Diego and Los Angeles, when they were done away with not very long ago."

or Cihuacuaquilli. Any offence against chastity was infallibly punished by death."* I have no evidence that those who broke their vow were despatched by being walled-up, but on the other hand a most reliable historian says of the human sacrifices which were so incredibly frequent, "The greater part of the victims died under the knife, but some were burnt alive, and *children were often buried or immured alive* or drowned." †

(5) We have every right to ask for evidence that the woman was walled-up living. Mr. Rider Haggard apparently considers that he has such conclusive evidence. The rope-marks on the ankles, he asserts, clearly show that the poor creature must have been immured in a niche living. By what logical process he arrives at that conclusion it beats my powers of analysis to discover. A dead body which had to be propped up upright in a niche might easily have its ankles tied, a living person would be compelled to stand up straight, and the tying of the ankles would only very much increase the difficulty of her keeping herself from falling forwards. However, waiving that point, there are surely other reasons, besides violence before death which might lead to the ankles of a corpse being tied together. What if the lower limbs had accidently been allowed to stiffen into some distorted position, would it not be natural to tie the ankles in laying out the body? Or again, the marks might be those of fetters worn during life, perhaps for many years.‡ I do not consider therefore, that there is so far any valid ground for supposing that the woman was buried alive.

(6) But, given even the fact that there is evidence of a tragedy and that the body was undoubtedly built up

* Orozco y Berra, *Historia Antigua y de la Conquista de Mexico*, vol. i. p. 216.

†. Hubert Howe Bancroft, Works: *Native Races of America* vol. iii. p. 443, cf. Ib. iii. p. 331: and Brasseur de Bourbourg *Hist. Nat.* vol. i. p. 316.

‡ A correspondent, other than the friend above referred to, tells me that the marks are very difficult to distinguish, and that the skin is all shrivelled up and sticking to the bones.

when yet alive, we are still only at the threshold of our inquiry, for there is not a syllable of evidence to show that the remains were those of a nun put out of the way by her fellow-Religious. On the contrary, the very circumstance, which might at first sight seem most suspicious, the presence of the remains of a child in the same niche, is to my thinking, one of the strongest arguments against such a presumption, To take the life of a nun for a grave moral transgression might be conceivably defended as an act of judicial authority, but to include an innocent child in the punishment could never have been regarded as anything else but murder. Moreover, in all these cases the nuns are supposed to have acted under priestly guidance, generally that of Dominicans, and in no country were theological principles more rigidly adhered to than in Spain during the sixteenth century, and among no Order more than among the Friars Preachers. Any participation, therefore, in such a tragedy as Mr. Rider Haggard describes, would have been known to involve irregularity and *suspensio a sacris*. Mr. Rider Haggard is surely aware that even the august tribunal of the Holy Office never claimed power to inflict a death-penalty by the hands of its own officials. The prisoner was invariable handed over to the secular arm both for sentence and execution. Is it likely that powers would have been left in the irresponsible hands of every convent abbess which were not enjoyed by the Grand Inquisitor himself?

From whatever point of view we regard it, it only becomes more evident that nothing but the clearest evidence, nothing short, in fact, of the testimony of eye-witnesses can justify us in accepting any alleged case of immuring. As I have argued in my former paper, the mere discovery of human remains is utterly untrustworthy. In almost every part of the globe bodies have been found enclosed in masonry in accordance with a world-wide superstition familiar to students of folk-lore.* The imagination of the people

* See Liebrecht's *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 284—296; *Revue Celtique*, vol. iv. p. 120.

amongst whom such vague traditions lie dormant is easily roused to connect them with any unpopular or mysterious object, and though Religious incur the largest share of these calumnies, they do not enjoy a monopoly.

It is not [says a reviewer of Mr. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* in *Nature*, June 15, 1871] many years since the present Lord Leigh was accused of having built an obnoxious person—one account, if we remember right, said eight obnoxious persons—into the foundation of a bridge at Stoneleigh. Of course so preposterous a charge carried on its face its own sufficient refutation, but the fact that it was brought at all is a singular instance of the almost incredible vitality of old traditions. The real origin of a story such as this dates from a time when the foundations of bridges, palaces, and temples were really laid upon human victims, a practice the tradition of which is handed down to us in the romance of Merlin, and a thousand other legends, to be finally embalmed for the benefit of posterity in Mr. Tylor's volumes.

More recently a writer in the *Academy* speaks in much the same terms.

It has been a common superstition in almost all parts of Europe that a new building can only be made secure by sprinkling the foundation with a child's blood, or by walling-up a girl alive in the masonry.*

But even this is only half the case, for the practice of upright interment has been familiar at many different epochs and in many different places. Whole families, it would seem in England, have retained this tradition, like the Pagets of Drayton, the Hobarts at Blickling, the Claphams, the Mauleverers,† &c. On the other hand, many of the cases are isolated and apparently motiveless. There is one such burial in an upright position at Breckles chancel in Norfolk,‡ where a nearly circular slab is let into the wall with the motto:

Stat ut vixit erecta.

I have spoken before of the burial customs of the

* *Academy*, July 31, 1886, p. 73, E. Peacock, F.S.A., in *Dublin Review*, Jan. 1889, p. 50.

† See *Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, vol. v. p. 249.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 349.

Capuchins, but I cannot resist the temptation of setting down a fuller account of one of these strange crypts, given by a bigoted Protestant at the end of the last century.

This morning we went to see a celebrated convent of Capuchins, about a mile without the city. It contains nothing very remarkable but the burial-place, which is indeed a great curiosity. This is a vast subterraneous apartment, divided into large commodious galleries, the walls on each side of which are hollowed into a variety of niches, as if intended for a great collection of statues; these niches, instead of statues, are all filled with dead bodies set upright upon their legs, and fixed by the back to the inside of the niche: their number is about three hundred. They are all dressed in the clothes they usually wore, and form a most respectable and venerable assembly. The skin and muscles, by a certain preparation, become as dry and hard as a piece of stock-fish, and although many of them have been here upwards of two hundred and fifty years, yet none are reduced to skeletons; the muscles indeed appear in some to be a good deal more shrunk than in others, probably because these persons had been more extenuated at the time of their death.

Here the people of Palermo pay daily visits to their deceased friends, and recall with pleasure and regret the scenes of their past life; here they familiarize themselves with their future state, and choose the company they would wish to keep in the other world. It is a common thing to make choice of a niche, and to try if the body fits it, that no alterations may be necessary after they are dead; and sometimes, by way of a voluntary penance, they accustom themselves to stand for hours in these niches.*

It seems clear from this that not only Religious, but

* P. Brydone, F.R.S., *Tour through Sicily and Malta.* Two vols. London, 1774. Vol. ii. p. 107.

If this was the case in Southern Europe, much more was it the custom in Mexico for the dead in religious houses to be interred in the church walls, or in the walls of the convent itself. As Mr. Wilfrid Amor, a civil engineer, eighteen years resident in Mexico, explains in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* for Jan. 27th, inhumation is difficult in that country because water begins to accumulate in any excavation a few feet below the surface. Hence the dead are buried in niches of masonry work, either horizontal or vertical. Senor Agreda attests that he had himself seen the bodies of hundreds of religious naturally desiccated in the crypt below the church of Santo Domingo, the very place where certain Protestant missionaries afterwards pretended to have discovered the walled-up nuns.

secular persons were often buried in this way. The same thing is attested by another writer in *Notes* and *Queries*, who tells us that: "Besides the friars and those who have chosen to be buried in the habit, there are members of other monastic societies and ladies in full dress."*

But to return to my more immediate subject. When Mr. Rider Haggard, after perpetrating the libel complained of, learnt, to his great surprise, from the Secretary of the Catholic Truth Society, that Catholics were unreasonable enough to deny and resent such charges, he naturally began to bethink himself how he might justify the accusations he had made. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* is a very convenient storehouse of information, and in an article on "Monachism." by that eminent canon-lawyer and veracious historian, Dr. R. F. Littledale, Mr. Haggard lighted upon some useful references. He found there that in 1763, the Parliament of Paris fined the Abbot of Clairvaux forty thousand crowns for causing the death of a prisoner in an *in pace*. That Mr. Rider Haggard derived his information from this source, appears first from the coincidence that he, like Dr. Littledale, speaks without italics of the "Parlement of Paris:" and secondly, from the fact that, in borrowing his information from Dr. Littledale, he has also borrowed one of those characteristic inaccuracies which invariably attend the citations of that author. The fact is, Dr. Littledale, in his article on Monachism, has borrowed largely, need it be said without acknowledgment, from the article, "Religieux," in the *Dictionnaire Universel* of Larousse. That writer, a bitter enemy of religion, states correctly that the *Abbaye* of Clairvaux was condemned to pay a fine of forty thousand crowns for the Religious for whose death the monastery was held responsible. Dr. Littledale has translated the word *Abbaye* Abbot, even in spite of the feminine participle which follows, and Mr. Rider Haggard, suspecting nothing, has copied his mistake.

* 4th Series, vol. v. p. 249.

And here I cannot refrain from a word of comment upon the *mala fides* which has recourse to a writer of the type of Larousse for information about the discipline of the Catholic Church. In this same article, "Religieux," the author, after insinuating the existence of a widespread corruption among the convents of the eighteenth century, goes on to declare that this state of things was by no means new, but had existed among Religious from the beginning. Even in the time of St. Basil, he says, we find him inveighing against the licence of the monasteries; and St. John Chrysostom would have had nuns who broke their vow of chasity not only put to death, but even cut in two or buried alive with the partner of their crimes. Most pious Anglicans, I fancy, will be somewhat shocked to find St. John Chrysostom in company with the fanatical abbots and abbesses who wall-up their Religious alive. But French rationalists are so wanting in discrimination, they never know where to draw the line.

Of course the great orator's words do not really bear the meaning attributed to them. In the heat of his indignation, he undoubtedly says that incontinent Religious *deserve* to be sawn in two, or buried alive, just as a political speaker, or pamphleteer, at the present day may sometimes say of his opponents that hanging is too good for them. But the Saint makes it clear, a few sentences lower down, that he has no more idea of his suggestion being acted upon than the modern politician has. "We cannot act as Phinees did," he says, referring to Numbers xxv. 11, "it is not permitted to us to seize the knife (*οὐ γὰρ ἐφεῖται ἁρπάσαι μάχαιραν*) and transfix such offenders with the spear. We endure the same provocation, but we do not take the same action. We find relief for our anguish in other ways, by our sighs and tears."

But to return to the case of the monks of Clairvaux. Mr. Rider Haggard, after being confronted with the Catholic Truth Society's pamphlet, sees it expedient to throw overboard the nun of Coldingham, but he falls back upon the French example. "I dare say," he is

good enough to own in his second letter to Mr. Britten, "that cases of immuring were rarer than is supposed, but that they existed, the instance of the fining of the Abbot of Clairvaux, after due investigation by the Parliament of Paris, seems to prove conclusively."

Mr. Haggard, as I have said, obtains his information about this judicial investigation of the Parliament of Paris from Dr. Littledale in the *Encyclopædia*. Dr. Littledale has borrowed it from Larousse. Larousse in turn has taken his brief account of it verbatim from M. Paul Boiteau, who in his work, *L'État de France en* 1789, writes thus: "En 1763, l'Abbaye de Clairvaux était condamnée par le Parlement de Paris à 40,000 écus d'amende pour avoir *laissé périr* des religieux dans les culs de basse fosse d'un *in pace*."* In other words, the monastery of Clairvaux collectively was fined by the then Parliament of Paris for having allowed some Religious to die, presumably of neglect, or insufficient nourishment, in the dungeons of the monastery prison. Now I am not concerned here to defend in any way the action of the Superiors of the abbey. The neglect which resulted in the death of the Religious confined in the punishment cells, may have been cruel and inhuman in the extreme, or the whole accusation may have been a mere pretext to vex and extort money from a wealthy abbey, while serving the political ends of the Parliament. This at least may be said, that the temper of the Parliament in 1763, the year of the expulsion of the Jesuits, and devoted to one long campaign against the Religious Orders, was such that they would have jumped at any opportunity of raising a scandal. Be this as it may, it is clear that, even on the showing of two rationalists like Larousse and Boiteau, it is not pretended that any monk was walled-up, in the sense of Mr. Rider Haggard. One may feel an absolute certainty that a writer like Boiteau would never use such a phrase as *laisser périr*, if there were any evidence that the murder-

* p. 194. It is noteworthy that in the second edition of his work, M. Paul Boiteau has left out all mention of this case.

ous act had been committed of bricking a monk up in a niche.*

I may add that no walling-up in Mr. Haggard's sense can be inferred from the use of the term *in pace*. This is evident for instance from the line of Victor Hugo quoted in my former article:

> Il faudrait
> Dit l'infant Ruy, trouver quelque couvent discret
> Quelqu' *in pace* bien calme où cet enfant vieillisse

Children do not live to old age in a niche.

Passing over the Coldingham case, already fully discussed in the paper several times referred to, we come

* The hope expressed in a note to the original article that at some future time, through the kindness of a friend in Paris, I might be able to give the true history of this sentence of the Parliament, from documents in the National Archives is likely to remain unfulfilled. The question in fact has been set at rest in a way which would deprive such a history of all its interest.

Through the friend just referred to information has come to me on the authority of two of the "Archivistes aux Archives Nationales" in Paris, Messrs. Legrand and Delachenal, that the original documents of the process either no longer exist or cannot be found, but that all that is known of the case may be found fully summarised in Guyot, *Répertoire Universel de Jurisprudence Civile*, Paris, 1784. vol. xiii. pp. 767-770. I have consulted the work referred to and find:

1. That the case was decided not by the *Parlement de Paris* but by an arrêt of the *Grand Conseil*, a sort of high court of appeal.

2. That it was not a criminal prosecution but a civil suit for damages. The monk who died in prison had run away from the cloister many years before. He had married in the world, but was arrested as an "apostate" in 1750 and died in confinement the next year. The action was brought ten years afterwards by his widow, on the plea that her husband had never properly made his profession, was no true apostate, and consequently had been unjustly imprisoned.

3. That the wife herself had also been imprisoned at the same time, and remained in confinement for three years before she was set at liberty.

4. That damages were awarded in two equal penalties—one presumably for the unjust imprisonment of the husband, the other for that of the wife.

5. That no word in Guyot's summary, from beginning to end, suggests that any unusual severity was shown towards the prisoners, or that her husband had died from any but natural causes.

to the "house near Waltham Cross that was once devoted to religious purposes." "Here," says Mr. Haggard in the first of his letters, "I was shown a dungeon in which, I am informed, the skeletons of two women have been found walled-up, and with them an earthenware pitcher." Now I have taken some pains to see if anything could be discovered about this curious find near Waltham Cross, but I have neither read nor heard of anything which in any way corresponds to Mr. Haggard's description. On the other hand, I *have* come across an account of human remains being discovered at Waltham, about a mile distant, and dissimilar as the facts are to those narrated by Mr. Rider Haggard, I am strongly inclined to believe that his story has no other foundation.

In the month of June some workmen, engaged in excavating for the basement of a building to be erected on the east side of the Harp Inn, Waltham Abbey, disclosed several human skeletons, some of which were buried in so peculiar a manner that I wish to know if any of your readers can give the possible reasons for such a mode of sepulture.

The massive foundations of the south boundary-wall of the abbey grounds abutting on the main road were laid bare, and showed that the Harp Inn and the buildings just taken down were within the boundary of the ancient cemetery belonging to the abbey, the remainder still forming the churchyard . . . . About six feet from the foundations of the south wall a perfect skeleton was uncovered, lying nearly due east and west. It was surrounded with lime, retaining its whiteness and friableness. About twenty feet from this spot, towards the abbey, a new well has been dug. When about six feet six inches deep, the workmen came upon three stakes, when, proceeding cautiously, they discovered that these stakes had been driven through three bodies which were lying almost entirely within the circumference of the well, the heads towards the north-west.

The writer gives some further details and adds:

Other skeletons were also found beneath the site of the demolished buildings, and within the boundary wall; but there were no traces of coffins or anything to indicate the period of interment.*

It may seem to some readers rather outrageous to identify the discovery of these skeletons within the

* *Notes and Queries*, September 21, 1867.

precincts of the old abbey buildings with Mr. Rider Haggard's story of the skeletons walled-up "in a house formerly devoted to religious purposes." But great is the power of the imagination, especially the trained imagination of an historical novelist. In any case, if Mr. Rider Haggard feels himself aggrieved, he has an easy remedy.* Let him give references to some trustworthy contemporary account of the discovery—such things do not take place nowadays without getting into the papers and being discussed in the archæological journals. It is not a little surprising that when Mr. Rider Haggard has such a first-class example of immuring under his very nose, so to speak, he should go all the way to Mexico for an instance to justify a scene which after all is supposed to have taken place in Europe. Moreover, I am quite sure that the publication of the details would be very acceptable to many antiquaries who, like Mr.

* In his letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Jan. 17th, 1894, Mr. Rider Haggard denies that the discovery he is speaking of is identical with that described by the writer in *Note and Queries*. Unfortunately Mr. Haggard did not, as I have requested, give references to any published account of the discovery. He simply tells us that the house, he thinks, is known as Cardinal Wolsey's house. "Beneath the building," he continues, "is a very curious crypt built in ecclesiastical style, that from difficulty of access I judged to have been used for purposes of secret worship in times of persecution." To what times of persecution can Mr. Haggard be referring, those of Diocletian, or those under Elizabeth? And if this hiding-place was constructed under Elizabeth, how on earth did the walled-up nuns come there? However, "opening out of this crypt is a darksome hole, where—so I learned locally, and the person who showed me over the place stated—the skeletons and the pitcher were found by workmen who broke through the wall while executing repairs to the fabric. Of course it may be that the tale is false, and no such skeletons were found." Thus far Mr. Rider Haggard. And I will venture to add: It may also be that the skeletons were not those of nuns and were never intentionally walled up. Further investigation indeed makes it clear that there is not a scrap of evidence to suggest that the remains are those of nuns. The house is at Cheshunt it appears, and nearly two miles from Waltham Cross. Part of the basement may be older than the reign of Henry VIII., but it is not suggested that these foundations ever formed part of a religious house of any kind. See Walford's *Greater London*, vol. i., p. 387.

James Parker, Mr. Mackenzie Walcott, Archdeacon Churton, and Mr. Peacock, have sought in vain for any more palpable traces of immured nuns than those supplied by the Abbey of Coldingham. Only a few years ago, a question was printed in *Notes and Queries** asking for justification for the belief that apostate nuns were walled-up alive. Among all the collectors of out-of-the-way information who contribute to that periodical, only one answer was sent in, and this consisted in nothing more than a reference to the familiar Coldingham story. Six months later the same correspondent sent a quotation from Lord Malmesbury's *Memoirs*, from which it appeared that some mummified remains had been seen by Lord Malmesbury in "the church at Arezzo," which he believed to be those of a man who had been walled-up alive.† With regard to this, I will content myself with remarking that one would hardly expect immured monks to be exposed for inspection in a cathedral, while, on the other hand, there are well-known instances of desiccated bodies being left open to view in that way—the corpse (*salma*) ‡ of Estore or Astore Visconti, who was killed in a duel in 1413, still standing upright in the churchyard wall beside the Cathedral of Monza, is a case in point.

And here we may leave the question. Enough has been said to show the utter worthlessness of the evidence on which it has been sought to justify a gross and offensive libel. If at any future time new proof should be adduced, the case may then be re-opened, but for anything which has ever been written on the subject by the assailants of nuns, up to this present, it seems to me that their case lacks even that *prima facie* plausibility which entitles them to ordinary courtesy. Mr. Rider

* January, 1886 *Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, vol. i., p. 48.

† Vol. i. p. 181, see *Notes and Queries*, July 10, 1886. Lord Malmesbury says nothing about the remains being those of a *monk*, but the correspondent who sends the quotation of course takes that for granted.

‡ See Amati, *Dizionario Corografico dell' Italia*, vol. v. p. 430. A modern traveller describes these remains as a sort of natural mummy.

Haggard, as a teacher of history, perhaps hardly expects to be taken seriously. In Mr. Oscar Wilde's clever paradox on "The Decay of Lying," it is said of him that "though he has, or had once, the makings of a perfectly magnificent liar, he is now so afraid of being suspected of genius, that when he does tell us anything marvellous, he feels bound to invent a personal reminiscence, and to put it into a footnote as a kind of cowardly corroboration."* *Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat.* Perhaps this is after all the most charitable explanation of Mr. Haggard's footnote about the Museum of Mexico. Yet, though he hardly expects himself to be believed, he is bound to remember that thousands *will* believe him, and that thousands more will be encouraged in their feelings of bitter prejudice against a class of noble Christian women, the heroism and innocence of whose lives may put us all to shame.

Postscript.—This paper appeared originally as an article in *The Month* for January, 1894. Mr. Haggard replied to it in the *Pall Mall Gazette* commenting with great asperity upon the tone and temper in which it was written. For this reason it was thought well to reprint it unchanged (in 1894), with the addition only of a few footnotes, in order that readers might judge for themselves of the fairness of the criticisms made. I make no further alteration now (1895) save to remark that I have in my possession autograph letters from the President of the Mexican Academy (Don Joachim Icazbalceta), and from two other Mexican antiquaries, avowedly liberals in religion, as their published works attest, all of which confirm in every particular the statement of Señor Agreda summarised on p. 10.

Reviewing briefly the correspondence in the *Pall Mall Gazette* which ensued, it is important to note that in the letter which appeared on Jan. 31, Mr. Rider Haggard surrenders the whole position. The object of Mr.

* *Nineteenth Century* (1889), vol. xxv. p. 38.

Britten's original protest to *The Graphic* was "to call attention to the extremely offensive and untrue assertions with regard to the immuring of nuns and the general management of convents," made by Mr. Haggard. That gentleman was put into possession of evidence which proved the alleged practice of immuring nuns to be a myth, and yet, without further inquiry, reprinted his romance and its offensive foot-note in book form, unaltered. The publication of the article now before the reader apparently provoked Mr. Haggard into a general appeal to the authority of antiquaries and students of history, and he now found himself obliged to withdraw his former assertions in the following terms:

"Before passing to this subject, however, I wish to say that I am now convinced that I was in error when I stated in my letter to Mr. Britten of August 9th that I believed the evidence of history to prove that nuns who had broken their vows had been immured in the walls of convents. This opinion I arrived at too hastily after consulting such authorities as I had at hand: but further research and communications that I have received from gentlemen learned in ecclesiastical history, show me that whether or not the taking of 'the life of a nun for a grave moral transgression might be conceivably defended as an act of judicial authority,' as Father Thurston suggests in his article,* there is no proof that so barbarous a punishment was ever enforced at any rate in this country."

* The passage in which this "suggestion" of mine is made, will be found *supra*, p. 12. It is strange indeed to discover myself posing as an advocate of the walling up of nuns. To avoid ambiguity, however, it may be well to state that to myself, as to every other well-instructed Catholic, the idea that superiors of monks or nuns enjoy the power of life and death over their subjects is preposterous and absolutely devoid of foundation. None the less, I can conceive that in a ruder age a stern superior *might* be so far misled by certain examples of severity in the Old Testament, *e.g.*, Numbers xxv., as to believe himself commissioned by God to visit the crime of his subject with capital punishment. I have never seen the proposition defended, and I have no reason to believe it ever was defended, but for argument's sake I am willing to suppose that it might have been.

To those who had paid any attention to what archæologists of repute had previously said on the subject this avowal is hardly needed, but coming from the source it does it is not without its value. Mr. Edward Peacock, F.S.A., tells us in a letter in *The Tablet*, Feb. 3rd, 1894, that his own article referred to above was the result of inquiries extending over many years, and Archdeacon Churton claims for his research the same degree of thoroughness. We trust, therefore, that in future nothing more will be heard in serious literature of the Myth of the Immuring of Nuns.

In the paper printed above, attention has been directed to one only of Mr. Haggard's libellous misrepresentations of Catholic practice. It must not be supposed that no others are to be found in his novel. The statement of the abbess, quoted on p. 4, who "has her pardon under seal," for a crime which she is about to commit, but has not yet committed, is an even more serious insult to the creed of Catholics. But it is impossible to deal with it here.

One last word. Mr. Rider Haggard complains of the folly of "raising so much dust" over things which are supposed to have happened three hundred years ago. It is his own allies in the campaign who supply the answer. One is glad that Mr. Haggard has committed himself in print to the statement that "the horrors formerly perpetrated in the name of religion, not by one party but by all, are happily done with now" (letter of August 9th); but any one who reads this correspondence will see that that is not the idea of Mr. Haggard's supporters. For them these things are going on in convents still. The bodies walled up in Mexico belong to the middle of this century: bodies were found freshly buried alive in Parisian churches in 1871. Mr. Rider Haggard's novel will be quoted by these gentlemen as a true picture of religious life as it was and *is*, and his foot-note will be held to endorse, from his own personal observation, the stories of wholesale poisoning told by "escaped nuns" all over the country.

SAINT ZITA

A Domestic Servant

(1218–1278).

BY LADY HERBERT OF LEA.

O Light of lights, Redeemer of Mankind,
Whose glory more in mercy shines displayed,
Concede Thy favour to my humble mind,
Increase my feeble memory with Thine aid.
My heart to-day some fitting words would find
To tell of Zita, Lucca's holy maid:
That Christians all may read her life and how
She sleeps in old San Frediano now.

And so, O Light Divine, I turn to Thee:
Refuse me not the mercy I implore!
But grant me, all unworthy though I be,
To tell in rhyme the tale oft told before.
Without Thy help, too hard it were for me
Even to begin: O give me from Thy store
A little wisdom; on Thy grace I wait,
While I this holy humble life relate.[1]

It is a sad thing in these days to hear many young women say: "Oh, I would be anything rather than a servant. Everybody looks down upon one so much;

[1] Translated by Francesca Alexander from Guaspari di Bartolommeo Casenti, 1616.

and the work is so hard; and one never can do as one likes," and so on. Now, as a very good writer has wisely said: "The world, in its estimate of domestic service, as of other things, is at variance with the truth, or rather, at variance with the estimate which God has put upon various conditions of life." The world thinks poverty the greatest of evils. Our Lord says: "Blessed are the poor."

How did He Himself come into the world? In the form of a servant. "I am among you as he that serveth," He said to His disciples; and His whole life was one of poverty, humiliation and obedience. But that there are some who have understood this and have been ready and eager to follow in His steps will be seen by the following true history of a servant girl who has been canonized by the Church.

Zita was the daughter of very poor parents, agricultural labourers, living at Bozzanello, a little village situated on a hill called Monte Sagrate, about three hours' ride from Lucca, a large Italian town. The Italian peasants, especially in the north of Italy, are remarkable for their piety. Zita's father and mother came from Lombardy, and though very often they had very little to eat, they were happy and contented, and brought up their children in the fear and love of God. Their two elder ones entered the religious state; the son became a lay brother, and the daughter, Margaret, a nun in a Cistercian monastery. Zita, the youngest, was born in 1218, and from a child she was the joy of her mother's heart. She was always obedient, loving, and good, and delighted especially in everything which related to the service of God. In those countries, the church

services are at five or six in the morning, so as to enable the labourers to go to Mass before they begin their work: and little Zita, as soon as she could walk, always accompanied her mother to this early service.

This good woman had little book-learning, but was full of love for God and charity towards her neighbour. If Zita was ever inclined to be idle, her mother had only to say to her, "That would displease God," for the child to rush eagerly to her work. And in the same way, if any little sacrifice were to be made, her mother had only to remind her that "our Lord would be pleased" if she did it, or that it would be "in accordance with the Divine Will," for the little girl to hasten to accept it, however painful or distasteful to her the act might be. Her sweetness of manner and her great modesty struck every one who saw her, and her greatest delight was to be able to do some little kindness for the sick or blind in their village.

So her life passed quietly and happily till she was twelve years old, when the increasing poverty of the family compelled her parents to try and find her a situation as a servant. Her father led her sadly enough to Lucca to look for a place, and there found one for her in the house of a gentleman named Fatinelli, who lived in a palace close by the Church of St. Frediano, a former bishop of that city. Here the little girl began her servant's life, and here she stayed for nearly fifty years, in spite of all she had to suffer. For at first, as is often the case, every disagrecable duty was laid upon her. She was poorly fed, had very low wages, and was expected to do more work than any one in the house. Yet she never grumbled or complained. Her habit was to get up very early in the morning, before any one was stirring,

to hear Mass at five o'clock in the neighbouring church; she would then return to her duties and perform them with such diligence and care that no one could possibly find fault with her.

Yet for several years she suffered a continual persecution from her fellow-servants. They laughed at her modesty and simplicity, saying she was a little fool; and her extreme anxiety to fulfil all her duties well they looked upon as a continual reproach to their own idleness and eye-service. Her master was a man of a very violent temper, and whenever anything went wrong in the house, the other servants always contrived to throw the blame upon Zita. Her mistress also was prejudiced against her, and never gave her a single word of praise or commendation. Unjustly despised and accused, reviled, overworked and often even beaten, she never repined or lost patience: but always preserved the same sweetness in her countenance and the same meekness and charity in her words and in her heart. Many of us have learned to refrain from angry words when unjustly treated: but few can be found who do not cherish some inward bitterness and who can freely forgive deliberate malice or unkindness.

The only pleasure Zita ever had was, by rigorous self-denial, to be able to give something to the poor who came to her master's door. She would save up her own portion of food and live upon the merest scraps, in order to supply their needs. One day, however, when she had given away all she had put by, a poor man, exhausted with heat and thirst, implored her for some relief. Poor Zita was in despair, when a sudden thought struck her. She seized a copper vessel, and filling it with water made the sign of the cross over it, while lifting up her heart in

earnest prayer. The man declared afterwards that this water was the sweetest wine he had ever drunk, and the fountain is still pointed out at Lucca and called by her name. Whenever, by some rare chance, she had half an hour to spare, she would spend it in going to see any sick people she knew of in the neighbourhood; and even when she had nothing to give them, she spoke to them so lovingly and tenderly, that they thought more of her visits than they would have done of the alms of others. In spite of her hard work and multifarious occupations, she was continually united in heart with our Lord, offering up every action of her life, however humble, to Him, and realizing His presence everywhere. She stinted herself in clothes as well as food, never buying anything but what was plainest and least expensive, and that not only that she might have more to give away, but also to mortify her self-love. This kind of self-denial was particularly irritating to her fellow-servants, who generally spent all they had on their backs. But she bore their insults and abuse with the same meekness and humility as on all other occasions, and was always ready to do them a kindness and to serve and oblige them in every possible way; so that at last, from very shame, they left her in peace.

In spite of her coarse food and poor clothes, Zita grew up very pretty, and with the sweetest expression of countenance. This brought on her the attentions and finally the persecution of one of the men-servants of the house, who pursued her everywhere, till, in despair, she threw herself on her knees before the altar and made a vow of virginity, imploring our Lord to protect and save her. Her prayer was heard, and her tormentor was dismissed, for

another cause, so that she was happily freed from his importunities.

At last her wonderful patience, charity and humility disarmed the enmity of the household. Her master and mistress discovered the treasure they had in their house, and henceforth treated her with the respect and consideration she deserved.

One Christmas, when she was preparing to go to the first Mass at dawn, her master spoke to her and advised her not to expose herself to the bitter cold of the church with its keen draughts and marble pavements, but to say her prayers at home. Finding, however, that she was bent upon going, he put his own fur cloak round her, only bidding her to be sure and take care of it and not lend it to any one, but to bring it back safely to him. Zita thanked him over and over again for his kindness, wrapped herself in the cloak, and went to church. The first thing she saw at the church door was a poor man, half naked, his teeth chattering with cold. His feeble appeal for help touched her to the quick. "My brother, what do you want?" she exclaimed. He looked at her with a gentle smile and touched her cloak with his hand. In an instant she took it off and put it on his shoulders, but told him to give it her back when the Mass was over, and that then she would take him to where there was a warm fire. She then went into church and was soon so absorbed in prayer as to be unconscious of all else. As soon as the service was over, however, Zita remembered the cloak, and looked for the poor man, but in vain. He had disappeared, and the valuable fur cloak with him. She was in great dismay, but there was no help for it; so she made up her mind to return home, confess what she had imprudently done to her master, and trust that

our Lord would put it into the beggar's heart to return the cloak. When she came back, Signor Fatinelli was, naturally enough, very angry, and reproached her bitterly for her credulity. She bore his reproaches meekly, and did not attempt to justify herself, only expressing her heartfelt sorrow for what had occurred. But her master could not recover his temper, and all day went on abusing her. Towards three o'clock in the afternoon, however, a stranger appeared on the principal staircase of the palace, whose distinguished appearance struck every one who saw him. The fur cloak was in his hands, and in the presence of her master he returned it to Zita, thanking her for her charity. Zita was overjoyed, and was beginning to speak to him when he suddenly disappeared, leaving her and her master in mute astonishment, and subsequently overpowered by the conviction that it was no earthly messenger who had restored the cloak.

But this was not the only occasion on which her simple faith was rewarded by our Lord. A famine the following year caused the greatest distress in that part of the country, and Zita, touched by the misery of those who came to her master's door, began distributing all she could amongst them, and among the rest a quantity of beans which were in a chest near the entrance. Then, suddenly recollecting that she had not asked permission to give them, she was filled with compunction and fear, and prayed that our Lord would avert from her the consequences of her imprudent action. It happened that at that very time Signor Fatinelli came into the hall to measure the quantity of beans he had in store. Zita trembled for the result of the inspection. However, to her great surprise, her master said nothing; and in

fact, on opening the great chest it was found to be quite full; our Lord having thus listened to the prayer of His servant and worked a miracle on her behalf.

On a subsequent occasion, at one of the great Feasts of the Church, she had gone to Mass as usual, and after her Communion became so absorbed in prayer that she altogether forgot the time, and only recollected it when she found that the sun was high in the heavens. It was the morning when it was her duty to bake the bread, and she rushed home, feeling it was almost too late to begin it, and fearing that her master and mistress would be furious, as there was literally no bread in the house. When she got home she opened the flour chest, and there, to her amazement, found all the loaves kneaded and ready to be put into the oven. She timidly went to one of the upper-servants and thanked her for having so kindly done her work for her, accusing herself of the neglect. But the maid said she knew nothing whatever about it and had never touched them. Every one in the house was questioned in vain, and when it came to the ears of her mistress, she gravely said: "It is clear that the angels have done this for Zita, and that this delicious bread was kneaded by no human hand."

Zita's great delight was to pray before the Blessed Sacrament: but she never neglected her domestic duties for this purpose. After some years, she was made housekeeper, and it seemed as if the whole tone of the house was then changed. She never allowed the servants to do their work in a slovenly or imperfect manner; but she so encouraged and often shared it with them, that they were perfectly devoted to her and would do anything that she asked. Her voice was

low and soft, and she was always ready to help and serve them. If she heard any of them quarrelling or disputing among one another, she would say: "Come, come, don't make such a noise about a trifle"; or, "It is not like Christians to speak or act so, but rather to be patient and to bear with each other." And she preached more by her own example than by her words, for no one ever had more perfect command over herself. "Her whole life," writes her biographer, "was spent in learning the spirit of meekness and in preserving it, in spite of any amount of provocation." Occasionally when the family went away from home for a short time, and she was more free from daily duties, she would make little pilgrimages to the churches and shrines near Lucca, especially if there were a Feast of the Patron Saint or the first Mass of a newly-ordained priest.

On Saturdays, her great delight was to go to the little Church and Convent of St. Angelo, about six miles from Lucca, across the river Serchio. One Saturday, when she had been detained at home later than usual by a multitude of little household duties, she still set out, though evening was coming on. A man on horseback, who knew her, and who was going to the same place, stopped and said to her: "Do not think of going on to St. Angelo to-night. Darkness will soon be here and you will lose your way, and perhaps perish in crossing the river." But Zita, though she thanked him, continued on her way, simply saying: "Our Lord will take me there safely." The horseman galloped on; but when he arrived opposite the church, to his amazement, he saw Zita kneeling there at the gate in prayer, having evidently arrived some time before him. "How did you get here before me?" he exclaimed. She looked up

smiling, and quickly replied: "As it pleased God, so it has happened."

She had a great devotion to St. Mary Magdalene, and there was a famous church dedicated to her between Lucca and Pisa, which she was bent upon going to see. There happened to be war at that time between the people of those towns, so that no one ventured near this church for fear of being robbed or murdered, but Zita was not deterred by this thought, and having an evening to spare, started off, carrying a candle which she wanted to burn at the shrine of the great penitent saint. It was a good ten miles' walk, and when she got there at nightfall, alone and weary, she found the doors closed and barred and no one to give her a night's shelter. Overcome with fatigue she sat down on the church steps and went to sleep. Meanwhile a violent storm of wind and rain came on, but still she slept and her candle went on burning. When she woke very early in the morning, she found to her amazement the church doors open, and that, though the water covered the steps and road, she herself was quite dry. The parish priest arrived at five o'clock as usual, to say his daily Mass, and was astonished to find the doors open and Zita praying by the altar. No one but himself had the key, so that it was evident that no human hand had opened them.

There was an old crucifix in a niche of the churchyard at St. Frediano's, close to her master's house, which Zita was very fond of visiting, especially after Holy Communion while she made her thanksgiving. She used to meditate before it on the mysteries of the Passion, for which she had a singular devotion. This was in fact the secret of her love, of her thirst for penance, and of her utter forgetfulness of self. The influence she had over the

souls of others was mainly owing to her continual union with God. Speaking little, and assiduous in her work, her daily duties never seemed to interfere with her prayer. She offered up every occupation, however humble and insignificant, to Him and thus sanctified every action of her life.

Zita used to tell the young servants in the house how convinced she was that domestic service was the safest and best state they could be in for their spiritual welfare; that the necessity of penitential labour and submission to the will of others had been of the greatest help to herself; and that the fact that all the necessaries of life were provided for you without the care and anxiety which such things often entail, was an incalculable advantage. "Believe me," she would say, "that labour is enjoined on all of us as a punishment for sin, and we should bless God for placing us in a station where we have the most effectual means of promoting our sanctification."

When, as we have said before, she was made housekeeper, and everything was entrusted to her which came into the house, she became most scrupulously careful in point of economy, remembering that she was to give an account to God of everything belonging to her master. She had a perfect horror of those little ways, so common among servants, of taking advantage of their master or mistress' ignorance of household affairs in order to charge more, or make a profit out of business transactions for their own benefit. Anything of the sort found her inexorable in punishing and stopping, so that knowing full well her own scrupulous honesty, no one dared to indulge in such practices. In the same way, she would never allow the slightest word to be spoken against modesty

or religion, and on one occasion insisted on the dismissal of a man who persisted in offending in this manner. Although she was the head of the house, she never allowed herself the least privilege or exemption from work on that account. Her favourite saying was that "Devotion is false if slothful." She was devoted to the children of the house, often helping the nurse in her care of them and sitting up at night if any of them were ill, so as to spare that servant any extra fatigue or annoyance. Children are sharp judges of character, and their love and admiration for Zita knew no bounds.

One would have fancied that Zita's hard life of prayer and labour would have satisfied her thirst for penance. But it was not so. Besides her continual abstinence and frequent fasts, she hardly ever tasted wine, which is as usual a drink in Italy as beer is in England. She wore a rough cord round her waist near her skin, and rarely slept in her comfortable bed, but on the floor and on a bare board. Her face became in consequence very pale and thin; but she was always at fever heat for her duties, and found strength enough for what she wished to do, though people declared she looked more like a disembodied spirit than a woman. She had a great horror of calumny or evil speaking of any kind against others: and if any one was thus blamed in her presence, she zealously took up their cause and always found some excuse for their faults.

We have not spoken of one of her tenderest devotions, which was a child-like love for the Blessed Mother of God: and she was rewarded for this love in many remarkable ways. One evening when she had been on a pilgrimage to a church not far from Pisa, she lost her way, and being exhausted with her long walk,

stopped by a fountain to bathe her hands and face and take a little rest. While she was resting there, a lady with a sweet and gentle expression of face came up to her and offered to walk home with her, saying she knew the way and was going in that direction. Zita was delighted, especially when her new companion began talking to her of heavenly things in a way which made her forget all her fatigue. Between Massa and Lucca they had to cross the river Ozorio by a fortified bridge, and when they reached it the gate was closed. But in an instant it opened of its own accord, and closed again after they had passed. Thus they arrived at the door of the Fatinelli Palace; but when Zita turned round to beg her companion to come in with her and rest, the lady had vanished, leaving her marvelling as to who could have been her companion.

In 1841 two travellers were going along that same road on foot and came to a way-side shrine on which was this inscription: "Sta. Zita, ora pro nobis"; a peasant girl who was standing by, pulled aside some branches which concealed a fountain behind the shrine, and said: "This is the fountain of St. Zita. The waters cure diseases, because she drank of it one night returning from a pilgrimage and met our Lady, who walked home with her. She was a great saint, and she protects our villages, so that we always come to her Mass, which is said here every week." Thus, what Zita's humility carefully concealed at the time, the voice of the people has declared to be true; for this incident was included in the proof of her canonization.

A few more words will complete the picture of this simple and holy life. Her biographer, who wrote her history soon after her death, and who knew her

intimately, says: "She took the greatest pains to preserve the treasure of her innocence by self-denial of all kinds and by the strictest custody of her senses. She especially closed her ears against light and foolish conversation, which often fills the mind with dangerous thoughts and images. She never allowed the smallest familiarity with the other sex, and in fact no one dared take any liberty with her. Her humility was the guardian of all her other virtues: her study was to appear little in the sight of men, and so she would often speak frankly of her faults to her fellow-servants and ask their pardon if she had vexed or offended them. A word of praise seemed to wound her more than a reproach. Her humility was well represented by her clasped hands—a favourite attitude of hers when not at work."

Thus she lived an ordinary life in the eyes of the world, but a supernatural one in the view of the angels, until she was sixty years old. Then she was attacked by a low fever, which lasted for several days before she could be persuaded to take to her bed. At last she felt that her end was at hand, and asked for and at once obtained all the last sacraments, which she received with full consciousness and extraordinary fervour. The whole household were in sorrow and dismay at the idea of her death. But not a trace of anxiety or alarm could be seen on her face. With a smile on her lips and her hands clasped, while her eyes looked upwards, she passed away at three o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, April 27, 1278.

No sooner had she expired than a brilliant light was seen above the house, and all the people seeing it, ran to the Casa Fatinelli, crying out: "The Saint is dead!" and imploring to pray by her body and to touch it with

their rosaries and crucifixes. Her funeral was attended by all the inhabitants of Lucca, and many miraculous cures took place at the same time, which so greatly increased the fervour and devotion of the crowd that the Canons of St. Frediano had to use force to lay her body in a stone coffin and bury it within their precincts. A succession of miracles followed, so that, only four years after her death, the Bishop allowed her tomb to be exposed to public veneration. This tomb was opened three separate times—in 1446, 1581, and 1652, and the body was found intact and in perfect preservation. The same thing happened in 1811, as the Bollandists have recorded.

Within forty years of her death, all Italy looked upon her as a Saint, and Dante gave her the title in his *Divina Commedia*. Leo X., in a bull dated April 11, 1550, granted permission to the Canons of St. Frediano's at Lucca to recite the office of St. Zita on the 27th of April with the double rite, a privilege which he extended afterwards to all the inhabitants of the city. She was beatified by Innocent XII. in 1696, and Benedict XIV. referred to her case as an exceptional one of rapid canonization.

Such was the life and such was the glorious death of the humble Zita. Christian servants! with such an example before you, can you be sad or discouraged? Zita had the same trials, the same difficulties, the same troubles as yourselves. Ill-tempered employers, harsh treatment, unreasonable orders, quarrelsome and unkind fellow-servants, overwork, fatigue, weariness of mind and body—all these she experienced. All these tried her virtue as now they try yours. But the thought of Jesus in His Passion calmed her irritation. Prayer and Holy

Communion, and the constant realization of His Presence, sustained her through it all.

You have the same means of grace that Zita had: the lowliest, the most ill-used, the most depressed among you may at any moment make known your trials, your wants, your sorrows, to the loving and adorable Heart of Jesus. Let Zita's example rouse you to greater courage, to brighter hopes. The busiest life may be a life of prayer. Perpetual toil need bring no hindrance to the union of our hearts with God. Your state of life, if you would only believe it, is full of help and consolation. Never forget that Jesus Christ, of His own free will and choice and for your sakes, became as a servant "obedient unto death." Will you not be willing to walk after Him on the royal road of the Cross, so as to reign with Him for ever in Heaven?

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Comforted.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

A GREAT many years ago the little island of Jersey, with its rock-bound coast, its lovely bays, its fascinating valleys with their *côtils* where flowers in spring jewel the slopes, was very different from what it is now. There were then no railways on the island, and big, lumbering omnibuses went their way in a few directions, but not very many. There was communication certainly between England, France, and Jersey, as well as with the sister-island of Guernsey; but the service was very bad, if compared with the magnificent steamers which now make their way backwards and forwards in so very much less time. People were not in such a hurry in those days; they were contented with a few posts a week from England, and did not cross oftener than was necessary. Of course a great many natives of Jersey had never been

to England at all, and others even never went to Guernsey, which, in their eyes, was a Channel island, certainly, but a very inferior sort of island to Jersey. This was a deeply-rooted conviction in their minds, and perhaps it might have been a shock to them had they ever realized how greatly Guernsey looked down upon them in every way. Only, probably they did not know, and as the old saying has it, "ignorance is bliss," in some cases, and possibly this was one of them. But when I write of people who had never been to Guernsey, or France, or England, I must not forget that there were many in the country parts who had never been to town, as St. Heliers, the only real town of the island is called. There was many an old farmer at St. Peter's, which is four miles from St. Heliers, who had never been to the town, and who had no wish to venture beyond his parish boundary.

There was less English spoken so many years ago, and more French, while, in the parishes which were furthest from town, many of the country people spoke only a *patois* which those learned in the matter declared was pure Norman.

Last, but not least, of all the alterations—only some of which I have enumerated—there were very few Catholic churches on the island, and this is a great contrast to the many which now exist, besides the beautiful Cathedral, the important convents, and the houses of the Jesuits.

On the eastern coast of the island there is a tiny village called La Roque. In the days

of which I am writing, a widow woman, of the name of Gallichan, lived with her son and daughter in an old farm-house, which had belonged to her husband's family for many generations. It was built of the grey Jersey granite, and fortunately the beautiful stone was left as it was, and not white-washed or stuccoed over, as is so often seen in the island. Over the door was the date of the building, and beneath it two hearts carved in stone. The piece of ground in front of the house was not adorned by any flowers, for the Gallichan family were strict utilitarians, and preferred their crops of potatoes to send to the English markets, and their cabbages. The latter, by the way, grow so tall, and are so strong, that their stems are made into walking sticks, of which there is a regular trade in the island.

When Mr. Gallichan died, some years before my story opens, his son, had he wished to do so, could at once have turned his mother out of the house, for the law of primogeniture exists in Jersey, and he would have been obliged to allow her one room and nothing more. This room, had he chosen it, would have been accessible by a flight of stone steps outside the house up to the door leading into it. These are often seen in the old Jersey houses, and go by the name of "widows' steps." But Edward Gallichan had no desire to do this, and his mother still ruled the house, while his sister helped in various ways.

One fine day, however, Mary Anne Gallichan,

who was then about twenty-two, declared that she was sick of working about the farm, and that she should like to go and serve in a shop belonging to her cousin in St. Heliers. It was a jeweller's shop, and Mary Anne thought it would be very much nicer to be there, among all the pretty things, than at her home. She was a good-looking girl, and taller than the Jersey people are usually, but she had the sallow complexion and dark eyes, so often seen, and the sing-song way of speaking, so commonly heard on the island. There was also this peculiarity about her, that she called all inanimate objects, he and she, as is done in French. Old Mrs. Gallichan only spoke Jersey French, which is not like the Norman *patois*, and very unlike good French; it is indeed as ugly a language as you could well hear.

Mary Anne was fond of dress, and liked to make herself smart to go to Mass at the little chapel, only lately built, which was at St. Martin's, and was dedicated to Our Lady and the Martyrs of Japan. It was a good long walk there and back, and sometimes they had the cart to take them, for Mrs. Gallichan was getting old.

For a girl to like to make herself look nice is quite right, but with Mary Anne the desire amounted to a fault. She spent much too much time in thinking of it, and would not hesitate to waste money on dress which should have been devoted to other purposes. So she was very

much pleased when Mr. Voisin said he would take her; she flung her cotton sun-bonnet, with its deep curtain, to the very top of the old oak press in her room, and vowed to herself that it would be a very long time before she wore such a thing again. Although when in St. Heliers she was very near the church in Val Plaisant, Mary Anne grew indifferent about her duties. The relations she was with were Protestants, and altogether she did not much care for anything but amusing herself.

As time went on, she grew smarter and smarter, and one day there was a terrible scene at the shop. Mr. Voisin found that Mary Anne had been stealing from the till, and on further investigation it was discovered that she had been robbing her cousin in many ways, but so cleverly that until then she had escaped detection. Mr. Voisin was, as a rule, a very easy-going man, slow to suspect anyone, and it was long before he realized what Mary Anne was doing. But when the knowledge came to him he was very much roused, and, saying he did not care two straws whether Mary Anne was his cousin or not, he declared he would prosecute her. This he did, notwithstanding the entreaties of Mrs. Gallichan and her son, who felt they could never hold up their heads again if one of their family went to prison. But there was no moving Mr. Voisin; the evidence was strong against her, there was nothing for it but to plead guilty, and Mary

Anne was sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

When she came out, she returned home, and found some changes had taken place during her absence. Her brother had married a widow with one little boy—Pierre, and they lived in the house with old Mrs. Gallichan, who had had a stroke of paralysis, and was now unable to move from her bed. The anxiety and distress caused by Mary Anne's robbery of her cousin had told upon her, and hastened the stroke to which, as the doctor said, she had a predisposition. As it was, she was there, a helpless invalid, speaking very indistinctly, and needing as much attention as a little child. So that, as the new Mrs. Gallichan had to look after the farm, all the care of her mother fell upon Mary Anne, who was not sorry for work which did not require her to be much seen.

She was ashamed and sorry for having been a thief, but at heart she knew well that the agony of remorse she endured, the ever present thought of her sin, was not because she had sinned against God, but because she was disgraced and shamed in the eyes of the world. Jersey is a small place, and every thing is a good deal known. Though Mary Anne hoped the general public might forget the episode, yet in the eyes of her family she was dishonoured, and this meant a very large circle of people, for the natives of Jersey marry and intermarry very much amongst themselves. She felt it at every

turn, and sometimes thought that she could not bear it. When she looked back upon it all, she sometimes wondered she had been such a fool as to be found out; at others she could not think how she could have run such a risk, merely for the sake of getting money to buy smart clothes.

One October day she sat in the kitchen, working. It was a large room, with high chimney-piece, open hearth, and brick-paved floor Mrs. Gallichan's bedroom was next to it, and every day she was lifted from her bed to the old black horse-hair sofa, from which she could see the people passing in the road at the end of the garden, and the expanse of brown rocks, if the tide was low, or of the sea, as it rose and covered them.

Edward had come in and was lighting his pipe. "Did you have a good day at the market?" asked Mary Anne, lifting her eyes as she spoke to her brother.

"Ah, very good, yes. I sold all my butter, and I called and saw Mr. de Gruchy about the pears."

"The Chaumontels?"

"Yes. He says we had better gather them the day after to-morrow."

"Of course. The eighth of October is the day when they ought to be picked," remarked Mary Anne.

"I have promised Mr. le Feuvre some," said Edward. "I wonder how many he will like to have?"

"I can go over and ask him, if you like," said Mary Anne.

"Good, that will be right. If he will let me know, he shall have them the very day after. Where is Martha?"

"She has gone out with Pierre; they have gone to Gorey."

"Ah, well, she will be back to supper. I will go and see after the fowl, and then come back and keep mother company." So saying Edward Gallichan went off, and Mary Anne went up to her room to put on her hat.

She had no wish to be smart now, and she wore always the quietest things she could put on. Indeed, she rather returned to the way she had dressed until a few years back, when she had become dissatisfied with her plain cotton gowns and big aprons, and mushroom-shaped straw hat for Sunday. Now she put on her sun bonnet, and felt she was not noticed in it, and that was what she wanted.

At first it had been a great effort to her to go out at all. Nothing would induce her to go to town; she never went to church, and she avoided all visitors as much as she could. The priest she had known so long, and who came to see her mother, used to try and persuade her at least to come to Mass; but his words never made any impression, and he usually left Belle Epine, which was the name of the house, with a sad heart, as far as Mary Anne was concerned. She was so sullen and taciturn, and was so

hard, that all he could do was to pray for her, and this he never failed to do.

Latterly Mary Anne had ventured out a little, but she avoided going to the neighbours' cottages or farms. She was not insulted in any way, and one child had his ears severely boxed one day for calling after her, and reminding her of her theft. But Mary Anne knew quite well that it was not forgotten, and her shame was very great. The temptation to steal never came to her now; it never had done so until she had given way to vanity about her dress, and it seemed strange now to her how she had lived throughout that time. Under her reserved nature there was a love of excitement that had made the risk of discovery almost attractive.

As she wandered out of the garden that evening, she paused for a moment to look at the view, though as a rule she did not much care for nature. As far as the eye could reach was an expanse of brown rocks, and as the tide was very low, the path worn by generations of vraic* gatherers could be distinctly seen, and Seymour Tower stood out against the magnificent blue of the sky. The whole sweep of Grouville Bay was before her, and to the left the coast, with its fringe of sand, the grey martello towers standing here and there, and the grand old ivy-clad pile of Mont Orgeuil at the furthest point. The air was delightful, and as Mary Anne walked along, she passed many little cottages

* Seaweed

all built of grey granite, on some of which the octopus—which is found and eaten by the fisher people on this coast—was hanging up to dry. Before the cottages were lobster baskets, and the men sat in blue jerseys knitted by their wives, mending their nets. All looked peaceful and lovely, and as Mary Anne went along, she felt out of tune with it all. She was suffering from shame and sorrow and it was making her a hard and bitter woman.

The house where the Le Feuvres lived, lay off one of the roads. Mary Anne knocked at the back door rather timidly, for she had never been there since she had come from prison.

"Is Mr. le Feuvre in?" she asked, as the servant opened the door.

"You, Mary Anne!—come in. I will go and see. Take a chair there."

"I only want to speak to him about some pears."

"Well, well, I will call him."

The woman left the room, and Mary Anne heard a whispered conversation outside, and a moment after, a child came in and stood evidently watching her. For a moment it did not occur to her that she was being watched, and she only wondered what the child was staring at, when suddenly turning, she found she was sitting close to a table on which was a quantity of plate. The servant had been cleaning it, when she came. It was plate that was seldom used, but Mr. le Feuvre's daughter was to be married on the Monday, and there were great preparations

for the wedding. In spite of the simple way many of the Jersey farmers live, they are rich, and have old silver and china that seldom see the light. They usually live in the kitchen, keeping the parlour for weddings, christenings and funerals, or other grand occasions.

A flush of deep shame overspread Mary Anne's sallow face. The child had been sent to watch her. She was still considered a thief, and treated like one, and her conscience told her it was not to be wondered at.

When Mr. le Feuvre bustled in presently, she could hardly speak for a moment, although he shook her hand and enquired after her mother.

"Yes, I shall want a hundred pears for the winter, of course," said Mr. le Feuvre. "Yours are the finest I can get, and we have not a single Chaumontel pear tree in our garden."

"The Chaumontel, she is a good pear," said Mary Anne, "she eat well."

"Yes, capitally. Well, can't you stay? Won't you have something to eat? Yes, you must have one of these 'wonders' Lydia has just made," and Mr. le Feuvre pointed to a dish of the cakes so often made in the island, and which are called "Jersey wonders." They are of dough, twisted into the shape like of the figure eight, and then fried.

But Mary Anne shook her head. Food would have been hard to swallow just then, she was suffering so intensely. Until this event in her life, she had suffered bodily pain now and then,

such as a toothache, or once when she sprained her ankle, but she had never known such shame before.

Mary Anne walked home, and when her mother had been settled for the night, went upstairs and was soon in bed. She said no prayers, but from long habit instinctively made the sign of the cross. She pressed her face on the pillow and closed her eyes, but sleep would not come. She did not cry, for she seldom shed tears, but felt as she lay there, most wretched and miserable. Never could she get over the shame, and the feeling that everyone about them knew of it was terrible. Then the thought came that she might leave the island, and go among those who did not know of her sin. But all her little money—her *rentes*—had to go to pay Mr. Voisin, and besides, she could not leave her mother, for Martha, her sister-in-law, said frankly that she would not be responsible for her care. No, there was the bitterness of it; there was no escape from the punishment which never seemed to come to an end.

At last she fell asleep, and even the wind which rose that night did not wake her. The old house was strongly built, and could bear the blast, which almost seemed as if it would blow away the little cottages close to the beach.

"Aren't you going to Mass, Mary Anne?" asked Edward, as they sat at their breakfast that next morning. The cloth was rough, but

beautifully clean, and there was a large oval loaf of home-made bread, which at La Roque is usually baked on cabbage leaves. There was some of the golden Jersey butter, and some fish, which, in Jersey farm-house fashion, was served cold. There was plenty and comfort, and all that they needed.

Mary Anne shook her head.

Every Sunday, Edward asked the question, and got the same answer; and as he was not a talkative man, he found it hard to argue with his sister. It was a very rare case to find any Catholics among real Jersey people, and that branch of the Gallichan family alone were of the true faith. Their being Catholics was accounted for by the fact that generations back there had been a Mathurine Goedic, of Breton family, who had married a Gallichan, and her husband had become a Catholic on his marriage. Edward's wife was a Catholic, for she was French.

"People know that we are bound to go to Mass," said Edward slowly, "and it give scandal, it do, you not going. Besides, it is very wrong, Mary Anne."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I don't care. You know why I won't go."

"Ah, well, it seem to me to make a bad job worse," said Edward, "but there, you know it all, as well as I do."

"Where is Pierre?" asked Mary Anne, to change the conversation. The brother and sister were alone at the table, for Martha, Edward's wife, had gone to an early Mass.

"He is sleeping late, he was very tired," said Edward.

"I hope he is not ill," said Mary Anne, anxiously.

"Oh no, he isn't ill," said Edward, who was very fond of his step-son.

"I should be frightened if he were," said Mary Anne, "he isn't strong."

"Well, he owes his life to you, that he do, and no mistake," said Edward.

"It seem strange that so many years have passed since that day," said Mary Anne, "and that now you should have married his mother."

"Yes, indeed."

The occurrence to which Edward alluded was one which had taken place before Mary Anne had gone to her cousin's, then, Pierre le Marais was a child of six. One day he was paddling about in Anne Port, when the tide coming suddenly up, he would have been carried away and drowned had not Mary Anne, who happened to be there, run in and saved him. That had been the beginning of the friendship between the two families. Now that Pierre was an inmate of the house, and Edward's step-son, Mary Anne had learnt gradually to love him very dearly.

She was not of a loving nature, and until then she had never really loved anything. Whether the fact that she had saved his life gave her a deeper interest in him, she did not know; but the child had taken possession of

her heart, and she found herself changing in many ways. Hard and bitter as her shame had made her, she never felt anything but tenderness and love for him. He called forth new feelings, and Mary Anne often wondered when she found herself scheming and planning things for his amusement, and how to give him pleasure.

"Ah! here you are at last," said Mary Anne, as Pierre entered. He was a tall boy for eleven, with small light eyes and sandy hair. He went to school not far off, and looked forward to being a potato merchant when he was grown up.

"Yes, isn't there any toast?" he enquired, never thinking it worth while to say good morning to Mary Anne, and contenting himself with a mere nod to his step-father.

"No, I will make you some," said she. "He will be done in a very little time."

It was a warm morning, for October is usually like summer in Jersey, and the brilliant sunshine poured into the kitchen.

"But you have not finished your breakfast yet, Mary Anne; let him wait," said Edward, as he passed his cup for some more tea.

"That does not matter," said she, and when she had poured out her brother's tea, she cut some slices of bread, and was soon kneeling before the fire, toasting them until they were of a nice crisp brown. Her face was flushed and hot as she rose from her knees, and Pierre never

said 'thank you,' as he proceeded to butter the result of her labours.

"Where's the quince jam?"

"There's none out."

"Just get some, Aunt Mary Anne," said Pierre.

"It's in the granary. I keeps it there because he is not very hot," said Mary Anne, laying down her bread again.

Edward had finished, and after saying his grace, he went away.

After going up to the granary, and looking in the old press, where Mary Anne kept her jams, she found what she wanted, and Pierre ate his breakfast silently. When he had finished, he pushed back his plate.

"Aunt Mary Anne, I wish you would give me a watch."

"What?—a watch?" exclaimed Mary Anne, completely astonished.

"Yes. I have asked father, and he won't, and mother says I am not old enough."

"You are not," said Mary Anne. "What do you want a watch for? Why, she would never go well with you knocking her about, even if you had one."

"I want one," said Pierre sullenly. "There are several boys at my school who have watches, and I want one too. You might give me one—say you will?"

"I have not the money. Why, you can't get a watch for less than three or four pounds."

"I want a good one, not a nasty thing that won't go," said Pierre. "Just you get me a good watch."

Mary Anne shook her head.

"I don't think I can."

"Then you are a nasty horrid thing—a Jersey *crapaud*," said Pierre, using the expression that those who are not Jersey born often make use of, in contempt of an islander.

Mary Anne looked annoyed.

"You should not call me names: now go and get ready for Mass, there's your father waiting for you."

Mary Anne turned to go to her mother, who was knocking against the wall, as a signal that some one must come to her. She wanted her pillows arranged, and a great many things done for her, and it was some time before Mary Anne was free.

As Martha had been to the early Mass, she said she could stay for an hour with her mother-in-law, and set Mary Anne at liberty.

When Mary Anne had cleared the breakfast table, she set to work to wash up. She moved about with a slow step. All life and spring seemed to have gone out of her life, and the grey hairs that were beginning to appear made her look even older than she was, for she was not yet thirty. There was a look of sorrow stamped on her countenance, all the more remarkable as hers was not a sensitive face.

As she went about her work, her thoughts were

very busy. She was thinking whether it would be possible to get a watch for Pierre, as he so much wanted one. She longed to win his love, and to get him to be attached to her, and she left no stone unturned to attain this purpose. She loved the boy as if she had been his mother, more indeed than his own mother loved him, and she felt an intense pleasure in spending all the affection of her nature upon him.

His mother said Mary Anne spoilt him, and so did she. She let him get his own way in everything; and she studied his tastes; he always had the pudding he liked, the fruit he preferred, and everything as he desired it. If he was in trouble with his step-father, which sometimes happened, Mary Anne begged and pleaded for him.

But Pierre, who was innately selfish, took it all as a matter of course. He was wilful, and always wanted his own way, and if he had the smallest feeling of liking for Mary Anne, it was because she obtained it for him. But he had hardly even this; he was absolutely indifferent to her. His mother he loved, as much as he loved any thing, but Mary Anne bothered him. He liked the good things she obtained, and all she did for him, but he would have liked to accept all and to give nothing back. And Mary Anne, he knew, did want something back. She liked to talk to him, and he was too much bored to talk to her; she liked to know all about his interests, and he seldom told her of them,

unless there was anything to get by doing so. He seldom thanked her for the loving care she bestowed on him, and took no trouble to hide his absolute indifference. The boy in his way had a certain power of judging character, and he knew quite well that Mary Anne loved him so much, that whether he thanked her or no, whether he was kind or not, she would do her utmost for him all the same.

But this is a digression from where we left Mary Anne over her cups and saucers.

At last a thought struck her. When up in the granary to get the jam, she had noticed an old chest that had belonged to her great-grandmother. She believed it contained only rubbish, but she had some idea that she had, long, long ago, put by there a small parcel of things which her mother had given her one day, and which she then believed were valueless. But her experience in the jewellery business had taught her a good deal, and she wondered now if there could be anything there which she might sell, and so obtain the money for the watch.

The very idea was delightful, and Mary Anne put by the crockery as fast as she could, and went up to the long low hot granary at the top of the house. There was a glass door in it, which opened on the roof, and from it could be seen the magnificent view of the bay, which that lovely morning seemed even more beautiful than usual. The waters reflected a sky of deep blue,

so blue that they almost rivalled in colour the famed Mediterranean, and contrasted delightfully with the varied shades of brown of the rocks.

Mary Anne did not stay to look at the view, but turned to the trunk, which was covered with dust. She flicked it with a duster which she kept at hand, and then opening it, she searched for the parcel she so well remembered putting there years ago.

Yes, there it was.

She opened it, and found some old ribbons and some lace which fell to pieces as she touched it, and then—here her hands shook with excitement—some old silver ornaments which had been in the family for years, and had belonged originally to their Breton ancestress, Mathurine Goedic. There was a necklace, and ear-rings, and a heavy clasp, such as the Breton peasants use for fastening their cloaks; but no one could have told they were silver, for they were blackened with age and dirt and the sea air, which penetrates and tarnishes things laid and packed away ever so securely.

Mary Anne took them out, and as she examined them, she thought that they were extremely like the necklaces and clasps which were made then in imitation of the old jewellery. These were really old, but Mary Anne did not know much of their value. However, there was nothing like seeing what they were worth, and she took them down with her. In passing her bedroom she

laid them in a drawer, and then she went down and found an old chamois leather and a little plate-powder, which was kept for polishing up their one piece of silver, an old family tea-pot. She brought both up to her bedroom, and locking the door, she set to work to clean the old ornaments. In a very short time she had done a great deal, and in an hour she had got them quite clean.

What now should she do with them? The ornaments were her very own, and she had every right to do as she liked with them. It was strange to her, as they lay on the table before her, to think how at one time she would have worn them herself. It seemed very long since she had cared so much about dress. Certainly she had no love for it now, and as she looked at the silver, she decided she would take it to town the next day and try and sell it.

As she did so, she felt a shrinking at the very idea of going into the town and seeing the familiar faces, some of which she knew would be turned from her, and then it came back to her how she had been watched the evening before at Mr. le Feuvre's. How could she do it? She would never have the courage, and yet at the same time she thought of Pierre, and of giving the boy pleasure. She must do it for his sake, and the power of love made itself felt more and more as she reflected that for that object she would gladly conquer even this repugnance.

She kept her secret to herself, and all that day

there was a happier look on her face than it had known for a very long time.

The next afternoon Edward was busy gathering the pears; for it is an institution in Jersey that pears are to be gathered on the eighth of October, more especially the Chaumontel pear, a *specialité* of the island, and a most delicious and beautiful fruit.

Mary Anne was obliged to help, and then all the pears, after being carefully wiped, were laid in rows on shelves for winter use, those for town and for Mr. le Feuvre being packed separately.

"How shall I get these pears to Mr. de Gruchy?" said Edward. "He wanted them to send off by the mail for Southampton, to-morrow morning."

"Cannot you take them yourself?" asked Mary Anne.

Edward shook his head.

"No, I have things to see to here. Say, Mary Anne, could you take the cart and take them in?"

For a moment she hesitated, and then she remembered that it would be an excellent opportunity for her to go and sell the silver. So she assented, and in a short time was seated in the cart, with the large brown hampers of pears behind her.

"Where are you going, aunt?" cried Pierre, who ran down the little front garden, as the horse and cart stood before the door.

"Into town."

"What for?"

"To take the pears to Mr. de Gruchy," said Mary Anne, smiling, and thinking to herself how pleased Pierre would be, if he knew the real nature of her errand.

"I wish I was going too. I have half a mind to," said Pierre.

Mary Anne's heart sank. She did not want to tell him her secret; half the pleasure was in the mystery she had about it, and she hoped he would not really go.

"I want to go and get my knife mended," said Pierre. "Can I go, father?"

At this moment Edward appeared, and when he heard Pierre's request, he shook his head.

"No, Pierre, I want you at home."

"But I want to go to town."

"Never mind, you do as I say," said Edward, laying his hand on Pierre's shoulder.

The boy shook it off.

"Never mind, Pierre," said Mary Anne; "who knows, perhaps I may bring you back something from town."

"Something I shan't care about," said Pierre, looking very cross.

However, he had to obey, and then Edward gave Mary Anne some more directions about her errand, and a special message for Mr. de Gruchy.

Edward also wanted some English money changed in town, and he handed it to Mary

Anne. In those days there was English and Jersey currency, and thirteen Jersey pennies went to what was called an English shilling So Mary Anne felt she had plenty of business on hand.

It was a lovely afternoon, and the horse went well, so that she reached Mr. de Gruchy's house at St. Clements in good time. Then she drove on to the town, and in Halket Place stopped at the door of a shop where gold and silver was bought.

The man, an old Jew, examined the ornaments, and as he was doing so, his wife entered. The two seemed to telegraph meaning looks to each other, and the man looked at Mary Anne sharply.

"Are these your own?"

"Yes sir, they have been in our family for a great number of years."

"Curious!"

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Varoni; "now will you step in here for a moment, for I want to see the things in the parlour where there is better light." So saying she lifted the partition between the counters, and Mary Anne passed through, into the small parlour behind the shop.

Strangely enough, Varoni and his wife did not follow her, and as Mary Anne sat down on one of the ugly black chairs, she wondered what they were about. Thinking that she would remind them that she was in a hurry, she went to the door and turned the handle.

It was locked.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Varoni were talking over the matter.

"I have locked her in," said Mrs. Varoni, "and she must stay there until we have ascertained that these are not stolen goods."

"Looks very like it," said Mr. Varoni, putting his finger to his nose; "and considering that silver things, such as these, have been stolen lately, we cannot be too careful. You stay here, and I will fetch a policeman."

Policemen were not common in those days, but Mr. Varoni was determined to detain Mary Anne until he knew whether the things were really hers or not. He knew her at once as the Mary Anne Gallichan who had robbed Mr. Voisin, and consequently he was on the alert. He paid a boy to hold the horse before the door, and in a short time he found the man he wanted. The first news he heard was that the silver ornaments, stolen lately from a house in Midvale Road, had been found and restored to their owner, and so these could not be them.

"The only thing is to get at Mrs. Gallichan, and show her the things, and see whose they are. If, as Miss Gallichan says, they have been in the family so many years, she would know them."

This plan was at once acted upon, and a cab being procured off the stand near the market, the two men went off to Belle Epine.

Poor old Mrs. Gallichan was somewhat flurried when she heard what the men wanted. Edward

looked very angry, but still he had to listen to Varoni's argument, that it was likely one, who had committed such robberies as Mary Anne had done, should be suspected.

However, the interview with the old paralysed woman was satisfactory. In spite of her feeble paralysed body, her mind was perfectly clear, and she recognized the ornaments, and remembered having given them to Mary Anne many years ago. Mrs. Gallichan was well known and respected on the island, and her word was taken without further scruple.

They had to explain matters as best they could to Mary Anne, but as a kind of reparation for having wrongly suspected her, Mr. Varoni, Jew though he was, gave her a very good sum for the things in question. She then bought a watch for Pierre, a good stout silver one, and the pleasure that this gave her quite made up for the pain she had suffered that evening. He was in bed, she heard on her return, but she slipped into his room, and put the leather case on the chair by his bedside, where he would see it the first thing the next morning.

She could hardly sleep that night, thinking how delighted Pierre would be, and it was a proof of the marvellous power of love that she thought more of him than of the unpleasant episode connected with getting the money.

"I say, did you get me this watch?" asked Pierre, the next morning, as he came down to breakfast.

"Yes—are you pleased?" asked Mary Anne, looking kindly at the ungracious face.

"I didn't want that kind—I wanted what they call a hunter."

"What is that?" enquired Mary Anne, while Edward held out his hand to look at the gift his sister had made Pierre.

"Well, you are good to him!" said Edward. "Can't you say 'Thank you,' to your aunt, Pierre?"

"Oh yes, thank you, of course—but I did want a hunter. A hunter has both sides silver, and you touch a spring every time you want to open it."

"I saw some like that," said Mary Anne, "now I remember."

"Then why didn't you buy one like that?"

"I didn't know you particularly wanted one like that, and they are much dearer. I had not enough money, I am very sorry," said Mary Anne humbly.

"Never mind. It will do," said Pierre gruffly, and then he busied himself fastening the watch to a chain he had coaxed from his mother.

Mary Anne felt very sad. She had so looked forward to his pleasure, and she thought he would have thanked her nicely. But he said no more, and she turned to her daily work with little energy.

Christmas came. It was very mild in Jersey, and the yellow jasmine grew and blossomed,

and the camellias had their store of crimson and white blossoms, all growing in the open air, under a sky that reminded one of Italy.

Mr. and Mrs. Gallichan had to go over in Christmas week to see a cousin, who was ill at St. Peter's. They were to stay away two nights, and had taken the cart with them. Pierre was not in a good mood, and as it was holiday time, he had nothing to do. He was always in Mary Anne's way, and she was feeling very poorly.

"Pierre," she said, on the first evening her brother was away, "I do not feel well. I should like to see the doctor."

"You don't look ill," said Pierre roughly.

"But I feel very bad," said Mary Anne, who, to anyone more observant than Pierre, would have looked very poorly indeed. "I did not say anything to your mother, because I wanted them to go to St. Peter's, and I was afraid they would not have gone had they thought I was poorly."

"I'm jolly glad they have gone. Cousin Dumaresq promised father a Christmas box for me, and so he will bring it back for me. I wonder how much it will be. Five francs at least, I hope," said Pierre.

"I don't feel well enough to go to Dr. Renouf, Pierre; would you mind asking him to come and see me?"

"All right. I will go as I go into town. I am going to stop in town to-night, you know,

with the Vautiers—they've got a Christmas tree."

"Very well—are you going soon?"

"Yes."

"You won't forget?"

"No fear."

When Mary Anne was left alone with her old mother, she felt worse. Her head was very bad, and she was hot and cold, and could hardly move about.

Pierre set off to walk to town, his head full of the Christmas tree at the Vautiers to which he was going, and after he had slammed the door after him at the farm, he did not think much more about the promise to his aunt. He had not been to Communion that Christmas, though he had made his First Communion the Christmas before. He was a careless boy, and had many faults, which he made little or no effort to conquer.

It was late in the evening when he remembered his aunt's request that he should go for the doctor, but he had no intention of leaving his party to go and remedy the delay.

The day and evening passed, and no doctor came.

The next morning Mary Anne could hardly drag herself to the door. She managed at last to do so, and went to an opposite neighbour, who sent at once for the doctor, and came and helped her in many ways.

It was the beginning of a long illness, and Mary Anne spent many long days and nights in great suffering, for it turned to rheumatic fever, and she was for a time dangerously ill.

During the time, Pierre seldom came near her. She heard him whistling about the house, and he never made any effort to be quiet.

"Where is Pierre?" she asked one day, as Martha came into her room.

"Oh, he has gone away."

"Gone away—where?"

"Well, it was no use telling you—you have been too ill, but his father and I wanted him to go to Coutances, to a school there."

"Why did you not tell me?"

"Oh, because you are fond of the boy, and you will miss him," said Martha.

"And he went off, and never came and said good-bye to me?" said Mary Anne.

Martha did not know what to say.

"Did he leave any message for me?"

His mother shook her head.

Mary Anne said no more. All that day she lay silently thinking of the boy whose life she had saved, whom she had loved and petted and spoilt, whose whims she had studied, whose part she had always taken, even against her better judgment in many cases. He had never cared for her, and the ingratitude and careless indifference to her feelings cut her to the very heart.

As she lay there in the chilly days of early

spring, she caught sight of her crucifix hanging against the wall. It had always been there, she had had it ever since she could remember, and yet in a way she never seemed to have seen it until then.

As she looked at it, she thought of the love of the Christ who had been crucified for her, and of His patience and forbearance with her, and loving care. How had she treated Him?

Then the human love she had known for Pierre helped her, as perhaps nothing else would have done, to understand how great are the sins which are committed against Divine Love. How much she had offended our Lord, how careless she had been of having sinned against Him! The shame she had felt had been at the consequences of her own sin, not because she had broken His laws. Then she thought of the years of neglect of Mass and her Easter duties, and she understood, as she had never done before, how wrong she had been.

On her sick-bed, she made many resolutions, and many an act of true contrition came from her heart.

The priest came to her, and she made her confession, and at Easter knelt in the little church, healed both in soul and body.

Several years have passed away.

Old Mrs. Gallichan is dead. There are two children at the farm, and Edward works hard, and lives the life of a good earnest Catholic.

Pierre has not turned out well: his parents are very anxious about him, and many prayers go up for the boy, who loves little but himself.

Mary Anne still lives at Belle Epine. She looks much happier than formerly, yet there is ever present in her heart an abiding sorrow for sin, quite unlike the grief she had felt for the consequences of the acts of robbery, although that caused her more public disgrace than many other more grievous sins against Almighty God might have done.

And so after long years Mary Anne was comforted, and tasted here a little of the blessedness promised to those who sorrow for sin for the love of Jesus.

Religious Instruction in England during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.

BY DOM FRANCIS AIDAN GASQUET, O.S.B.

THE history of the pre-Reformation Church in England has yet to be written. To many this may perhaps seem a somewhat bold statement in view of all that has hitherto appeared in print bearing on the ecclesiastical history of this country. Let me explain my precise meaning. For the most part, until quite recent times, the story of this England of ours has been made to consist mainly of a series of biographies of its rulers, intermingled with more or less detailed accounts of the wars and battles by which they mounted to power or rendered their names illustrious. Of the nation itself, as apart from the monarch who honoured it by ruling over it, the historian in the past troubled his readers as little as possible; and thus, whilst he might learn to know the dates of many battles and the genealogies of many royal houses, the inquirer remained practically ignorant of the English people. In a similar spirit Church annalists have not thought it their duty to record much beyond the doings of illustrious English Churchmen and the most conspicuous results which have flowed from their actions and their ecclesiastical policy generally.

Now, however, we are anxious to learn something more about the people who composed the nation, of the conditions under which they lived and acted, of their desires and aspirations, and of their struggles against difficulties external and internal. And in the same way the thoughts of all inquirers are turning more and more to a consideration of the religious side of our national life, an inquiry which promises to enlighten us at last as to the real history of the religion of the English people in the later middle ages and the century of the Reformation. What, for example, did our forefathers definitely believe? How were they affected by the religious system under which they lived? How were the services carried on in the churches, and what were the popular devotions of the time? Were the religious offices well frequented, and what was the general character of the behaviour of the people whilst present at them? How did the priests instruct their flocks, and what profit did they seemingly derive from their ministrations? What did the Church do for the great cause of education, and for the social and material welfare of the people at large? These and a hundred kindred questions are daily being proposed, but who is there in England to-day capable of giving any satisfactory reply to them? In order to form any judgment on these matters we should require to have the evidence still buried in our national archives beneath the dust of many centuries placed fairly and dispassionately before us. For myself, I may perhaps be permitted to say that a familiarity of some years with original and much-neglected sources has taught me as a first lesson and

condition of knowledge, that I know little—or what, when compared to all that yet remains to be done, practically is very little—about the social condition, the influence and inner life of the Church of England previous to the sixteenth century. In spite of this, however, I venture here to propose for consideration an important question regarding the Church in this country during, say, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is a very simple point, but one, I venture to think, which has not hitherto been sufficiently considered, and one the answer to which must seriously affect our judgment as to the character of the ecclesiastical system swept away by the so-called Reformation.

The first duty of the Church, after the ministration of the sacraments, is obviously to teach and direct its members in all matters of faith and practice, and to watch over the eternal interests of the Christian people. Was the pre-Reformation Church in England mindful of this obligation, or did it neglect so plain and essential a duty imposed upon all its ministers by its Divine Founder? This, then, is the plain question—Was there in Catholic days in England any systematic religious instruction? and if so, what was done in this important matter?

At the outset it must be admitted that the general opinion of Protestant writers has been, perhaps naturally, that in Catholic England the people were allowed to grow up in profound ignorance on all religious matters, and that there was no systematic instruction on points of belief and observance given by the clergy. I cannot, moreover, shut my eyes to the fact that in this verdict many Catholic writers have concurred. Conversation likewise with Catholics,

as well ecclesiastics as laymen, has led me to conclude that at the present day the general opinion is, that this sad and very black view of the way in which the Catholic Church of this country neglected its obvious duty of instructing the people in religion cannot be gainsaid.

It should, however, in all fairness be borne in mind, at the very outset, that up to the present time, so far as I am aware, no evidence whatever has been forthcoming, except the somewhat fervid declamations of those engaged in the destruction of the ancient faith, in support of this verdict; and one cannot but remember that barely ten years ago the English public generally implicitly believed in the traditional picture, drawn by non-Catholics in past centuries, of the appalling immoralities of monks and nuns, and the wholesale corruption of the clergy of England at the time of the suppression of the religious houses. We have lived to see a marvellous change follow upon the production of evidence. The unjust judgment after holding for many generations has now practically been reversed, and the unworthy stories originally "founded on ignorance and believed in only through the prejudice of subsequent generations have now," as the highest Protestant authority on the history of this period has declared, "gone for ever." This may well encourage a hope that an examination of evidence may lead to a similar rectification of what I firmly believe to be an equally false judgment passed upon the secular clergy of England in Catholic days, in regard to their neglect of the duty of instructing the people committed to their care.

I cannot help thinking that Chaucer's typical priest was not a mere creation of his imagination, but

that the picture must have had its counterpart in numberless parishes in England in the fourteenth century. This is how the poet's priest is described :

> A good man was ther of religioun,
> And was a poure parsoun of a town ;
> But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
> He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
> That Christe's Gospel trewëly wolde preche,
> His parischens devoutly wolde he teche.
> * * * * *
> But Christe's love and His Apostles twelve
> He taughte, but first he folwede it himselve.

You will remember too that the story Chaucer makes his priest contribute to the *Canterbury Tales* is nothing but an excellent and complete tract, almost certainly a translation of a Latin theological treatise, upon the Sacrament of Penance.

As a sample, however, of what is popularly believed on this subject at the present day, I will take the opinion of by no means an extreme party writer, Bishop Hobhouse. "Preaching," he says, "was not a regular part of the Sunday observances as now. It was rare, but we must not conclude from the silence of our MSS. (*i.e.*, churchwardens' accounts) that it was never practised." In another place he states upon what he thinks sufficient evidence, "that there was a total absence of any system of clerical training, and that the cultivation of the conscience as the directing power of man's soul and the implanting of holy affections in the heart, seem to have been no part of the Church's system of guidance."

Further, in proof that this view as to the teaching of the English Church in the later middle ages is held by even Catholics, I need only quote the words of a well-known writer, to be found in the *Dublin Review* for July, 1891 :

At the end of the fifteenth century [writes Mr. W. S. Lilly] the Church in England, as in the greatest part of Europe, was in a lamentable condition. There is a mass of evidence that multitudes of Christians lived in almost total ignorance of the doctrines, and in almost complete neglect of the duties of their faith. The *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria* formed the sum of the knowledge of their religion possessed by many, and not a few passed through the world without receiving any sacrament save that of Baptism.

It is, of course, impossible for us to pass any opinion on the "mass of evidence" to which Mr. Lilly appeals in proof of the soundness of his sweeping condemnation of the Church, not in England merely, but "in the greater part of Europe," since he has only given us the result without furnishing us with the grounds of his judgment. For my own part I think that such general judgments must be untrustworthy, and that it is necessary—so different were the circumstances of each—to take each country into consideration by itself. For Germany, the labours of the late Professor Janssen, even after the largest deductions have been made for a possible enthusiasm, or idealizing, have conclusively proved the existence of abundant religious teaching during the century which preceded the coming of Luther. As to England, about which we are at present concerned, we can only suppose that Mr. Lilly has been engaged in researches of which, as yet, the world knows nothing. For many years having been occupied in collecting information upon this very point, I may at once say, that so far from my studies tending to confirm Mr. Lilly's verdict as to the "almost total ignorance of the doctrines," and almost "complete neglect of the duties of the faith" in

which Catholics were allowed to live and die, they have led me to the opposite conclusion—namely, that in pre-Reformation days the people were well instructed in their faith by priests, who faithfully discharged their plain duty in this regard.

Let me state the grounds of this opinion. For practical purposes we may divide the religious teaching given by the clergy in the two classes of *sermons* and *instructions*. The distinction is obvious; by the first are meant those set discourses to prove some definite theme, or expound some definite passage of Holy Scripture, or deduce the lessons to be learnt from the life of some saint. In other words, putting aside the controversial aspect, which, of course, was rare in those days, a sermon in mediæval times was much what a sermon is to-day. There was this difference, however, that in pre-Reformation days the sermon was not so frequent as in these modern times. Now, whatever instruction is given to the people at large is conveyed to them almost entirely in the form of set sermons, which, however admirable in themselves, seldom convey to their hearers consecutive and systematic, dogmatic and moral teaching. Mediæval methods of imparting religious knowledge were different. For the most part the priest fulfilled the duty of instructing his flock by plain, unadorned, and familiar instructions upon matters of faith and practice. These must have much more resembled our present catechetical instructions than our modern pulpit discourses. To the subject of set sermons I shall have occasion to return presently, but as vastly more important, at any rate in the opinion of our Catholic forefathers, let us first consider the question of familiar instruc-

tions. For the sake of clearness we will confine our attention to the two centuries (the fourteenth and fifteenth) previous to the great religious revolution under Henry VIII.

Before the close of the thirteenth century—namely, in A.D. 1281, Archbishop Peccham issued the celebrated Constitutions of the Synod of Oxford which are called by his name. There we find the instruction of the people legislated for minutely:

> We order [runs the Constitution] that every priest having the charge of a flock do, four times in each year (that is, once each quarter), on one or more solemn feast-days, either himself or by some one else, instruct the people in the vulgar language simply and without any phantastical admixture of subtle distinctions, in the articles of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Evangelical Precepts, the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins with their offshoots, the seven principal virtues, and the Seven Sacraments.

The Synod then proceeded to set out in considerable detail each of the points upon which the people must be instructed. Now it is obvious that if four times a year this law was complied with in the spirit in which it was given, the people were very thoroughly instructed indeed in their faith. But, was this law faithfully carried out by the clergy, and rigorously enforced by the Bishops in the succeeding centuries? That is the real question. I think that there is ample evidence that it was. In the first place, the Constitutions of Peccham are referred to constantly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the foundation of the existing practices in the English Church. Thus, to take a few specific instances in the middle of the fourteenth century, the decrees of a diocesan Synod order:

That all rectors, vicars, or chaplains holding ecclesiastical offices shall expound clearly and plainly to their people, on all Sundays and feast-days, the Word of God and the Catholic faith of the Apostles; and that they shall diligently instruct their subjects in the articles of faith, and teach them in their native language the Apostles' Creed, and urge them to expound and teach the same faith to their children.[1]

Again, in A.D. 1357, Archbishop Thoresby, of York, anxious for the better instruction of his people, commissioned a monk of St. Mary's, York, named Gotryke, to draw out in English an exposition of the Creed, the Commandments, the seven deadly sins, &c. This tract the Archbishop, as he says in his Preface, "through the counsel of his clergy, sent to all his priests:"

So that each and every one, who under him had the charge of souls, do openly, in English, upon Sundays teach and preach them, that they have cure of the law and the

[1] Wilkins, iii. 11. Two curious instances of the care taken by the Bishops to see that priests were able to instruct their people may be quoted. After the great plague of 1349, as is notorious, many were admitted to Holy Orders in order to fill the decimated ranks of the clergy without sufficient learning and preparation. On June 24, 1385, the illustrious William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, caused Sir Roger Dene, rector of the Church of St. Michael, in Jewry Street, Winchester, to swear upon the Holy Gospels that he would learn within twelve months the articles of faith; the cases reserved to the Bishop; the Ten Commandments; the seven works of mercy; the seven mortal sins; the Sacraments of the Church, and the form of administering and conferring them; and also the form of baptizing, &c., as contained in the Constitutions of Archbishop Peccham. The same year—on July 2—the Bishop exacted from John Corbet, who had been instituted on June 2 previously to the rectory of Bradley, in Hants, a similar obligation to learn the same before the feast of St. Michael then next ensuing. In the former case, Roger Dene had been Rector of Ryston, in Norfolk, and had only been instituted to his living at Winchester by the Bishop of Norwich, three days before William of Wykeham required him to enter into the above obligation.

way to know God Almighty. And he commands and bids, in all that he may, that all who have keeping or cure under him, enjoin their parishioners and their subjects, that they hear and learn all these things, and oft, either rehearse them till they know them, and so teach them to their children, if they any have, when they are old enough to learn them; and that parsons and vicars and all parish priests inquire diligently of their subjects at Lent time, when they come to shrift, whether they know these things, and if it be found that they know them not, that they enjoin them upon his behalf, and on pain of penance, to know them. And so there be none to excuse themselves through ignorance of them, our father the Archbishop of his goodness has ordained and bidden that they be showed openly in English amongst the flock.

To take another example, the Acts of the Synod held by Simon Langham at Ely in A.D. 1364, order that every parish priest frequently preach and expound the Ten Commandments, &c., in English (*in idiomate communi*), and all priests are urged to devote themselves to the study of the Sacred Scripture, so as to be ready "to give an account of the hope and faith" that is in them. Further, they are to see that the children are taught their prayers; and even adults, when coming to confession, are to be examined as to their religious knowledge.[1]

Even when the rise of the Lollard heretics rendered it important that some check should be given to general and unauthorized preaching, this did not interfere with the ordinary work of instruction. The orders of Archbishop Arundel in A.D. 1408, forbidding all preaching without an episcopal license, set forth, in distinct terms, that this prohibition did not apply "to the parish priests," &c.,

[1] Wilkins, iii. 59.

who by the Constitutions of Archbishop Peccham, were bound to instruct their people, in simple language, on all matters concerning their faith and observance. And further, in order to check the practice of treating people to such formal and set discourses, these simple and practical instructions were ordered to be adopted without delay in all parish churches.

To this testimony of the English Church as to the value attached to popular instruction, I may add the authority of the Provincial Council of York held in A.D. 1466 by Archbishop Nevill. By its decrees, not only is the order as to systematic quarterly and simple instructions reiterated, but the points of the teaching are again set out, in great detail, by the Synod.

There is, moreover, I believe, ample evidence to convince any one who may desire to study the subject, that this duty of giving plain instructions to the people was not neglected up to the era of the Reformation itself. During the fifteenth century, manuals to assist the clergy in the performance of this obligation were multiplied in considerable numbers; which would not have been the case had the practice of frequently giving these familiar expositions fallen into abeyance. Of some of these manuals I shall speak presently, and here I would note specially that one of the earliest books ever issued from an English press by Caxton, probably at the same time (A.D. 1483) as the *Liber Festivalis* (or book of sermons for Sundays and feast-days), was a set of four lengthy discourses published, as they expressly declare, to enable priests to fulfil the obligation imposed on them by the Constitutions of

Peccham.[1] As these were intended to take at least four Sundays, and as the whole set of instructions had to be given four times each year, it follows that at least sixteen Sundays, or a quarter of the year, were devoted to this simple and straightforward teaching, to every soul in the parish, what every Christian was bound to believe and to do.[2]

Looking at the character of these instructions, we need not be surprised that priests should not often have thought it necessary to commit them to writing. They were given as a matter of course, as a necessary part of the round of their priestly duty, and there is naturally very little record of what must have been part of the routine of common clerical life. Let me take what is a parallel instance. Do we expect that some centuries hence there will be any evidence forthcoming to show that the clergy of the great city of London, in this year 1893, have

[1] Probably there were many similar works issued by the first English printers. In Lansd. MS. 379, there is a *black letter* tract, printed by W. de Worde, to enable priests to comply with the command of the Synod.

[2] The work upon which Caxton's *Liber Festivalis* was founded is a volume written in the early part of the fourteenth century by John Myrc. Of this see later. Here we may note that in several copies of the MSS. *Festivale* there may be found other matters useful for the priest in the work of instructing others. For example, "De magna sentencia pronuncianda, hoc modo;" the days on which no servile work might be done, according to Archbishop Arundel's *Constitutions*, notes on various Papal Constitutions, &c. In one MS. (Harl. MS. 2403), following upon the *Festivale*, is a short explanation of the Creed, *Pater noster*, &c. This latter instruction is introduced by the form, "Good men and women, ye shall know well yt each curate is bownden by the law of Holy Church to expound the *Pater noster* to his parischonys twyes in the yere." The substance of these instructions is used in many copies of the sermons of the period. In the copy (MS. Reg. 18 B. xxv.), the people are addressed as "Worschipful frendys," or "Worschipful and reverent frendys." The discourses for the time about Easter appear to have been prepared to preach before the Court, as they commence with the words, "Worschypul sufferanc and frendys."

been doing their duty in instructing the children of their schools in religious knowledge? Or, to put it another way: what explicit evidence is there likely to be, say, a couple of hundred years hence (even if meantime there be no such wholesale destruction of documents as took place in the sixteenth century), that, say, the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is regularly administered by our Catholic clergy to-day? For the same reason it would be asking more than we have any right to expect, to demand formal documentary evidence of the performance of this plain and well-recognized duty of religious instruction.

We have, however, I expect, sufficient material to satisfy most people. The Episcopal, or Chapter, Registers fortunately in some few cases contain documents recording the results of the regular visitation of parishes. It is almost by chance, of course, that papers of this kind have been preserved. Most of them would have been destroyed as possessing little importance in the eyes of those who ransacked the archives at the time of the change of religion. The testimony of these visitation papers as to the performance of this duty of instruction on the part of the clergy is most valuable. Hardly less important is the proof they afford of the intelligent interest taken by the lay-folk of the parish in the work, and of their capability of rationally and religiously appreciating the instructions given them by their clergy. The process of these visitations must be understood. First of all, certain of the parishioners were chosen and examined upon oath as to the state of the parish, and as to the way in which the pastor performed his duties. As samples of these sworn

depositions we may take what are to be found in a "Visitation of Capitular Manors and Estates of the Exeter Diocese," extracts from which have recently been printed by Prebendary Hingeston Randolph, in the Register of Bishop Stapeldon. The record of the Visitations comprises the first fifteen years of the fourteenth century; at one place, Colaton, we find the *jurati* depose that their parson preaches in his own way, and on the Sundays expounds the Gospels as well as he can (*quatenus novit*)! He does not give them much instruction (*non multum eos informat*), they think, in "the articles of faith, the Ten Commandments, and the deadly sins." At another place, the priest, one Robert Blond, "preaches, but," as appears to the witnesses, "not sufficiently clearly;" but they add, as if conscious of some hypercriticism, that they had long been accustomed to pastors who instructed them most carefully in all that pertained to the salvation of their souls. But these are the least satisfactory cases. In most instances the priest is said to instruct his people "well (*bene*) and excellently (*optime*)," and the truth of the testimony appears more clearly in places where, in other things, the parish-folk do not consider their priest quite perfection, as for instance at Culmstock, where the vicar, Walter, is said to be too long over the Matins and Mass on feasts; or still more at St. Mary Church, where the people think that in looking after his worldly interests, their priest is somewhat too hard on them in matters of tithe.

The Register from which these details are taken is a mere accidental survival, but the point which it is of importance to remember is this: that during Catholic times in the course of every few years the

clergy were thus personally reported upon, so to say, to the chief pastor or his delegates, and the oath of the witnesses is a proof of how gravely this duty was regarded. And here I may note in passing, a fact little realized or even understood, namely, that one of the great differences between ecclesiastical life in the middle ages and in modern times lies in the fact that then people had no chance of going to sleep. There was a regular system of periodical visitations, and everything was brought to the test of inquiry of a most elaborate and searching kind, in which every corner was swept out.

In this special instance, before passing on, I would call attention to the manifest intelligence, in spiritual things, shown by these jurors—peasants and farmers —in out-of-the-way parishes of clod-hopping Devon, in the early years of the fourteenth century. I have a doubt whether, notwithstanding the Board Schools, any of our own country parish-folk could do better at the present day.

To assist parish priests in the preparation of these familiar discourses, various manuals were drawn up during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is possible now to refer to only one or two of the best known, but as a fact a large number of such works may be found in our national MSS. collections. I will first name the volume called *Pars Oculi Sacerdotis*, which was probably composed either by a certain William Pagula, or Walter Parker, about the middle of the fourteenth century. It was very popular and much sought after. It is named frequently in inventories and wills, and has thus sometimes been an evident puzzle to editors. No less than five complete copies, as well as several fragments, are among the

MSS. in the British Museum. It well deserved its popularity among the pre-Reformation clergy, for it not only furnishes most useful matter for the usual parish instructions, but is really a very complete manual of teaching on almost every detail of clerical life. One portion of the tract is devoted to the subject of the parochial discourses, which the author declares have to be given by all priests once in each quarter. In delivering these the priest is urged to be as simple as possible in his language, and to suit himself in every way to his audience.[1]

[1] Some further account of this important tract may be given with advantage. The tract begins by instructing the priest on the *praxes confessarii:* the kind of questions it is well to ask from various people —*e.g.*, religious, secular priests, merchants, soldiers, &c. Then comes a method of examination of conscience in detail, &c. The priest is advised to urge his penitents to say seven times daily the *Pater* and *Creed* to correspond to the seven canonical hours. Should any one be found not to know these he is to be enjoined to learn them, together with the *Ave Maria*, at once. The confessor is to inculcate a devotion to the Guardian Angels upon those who come to him, and teach them some little verses to say in order to beg the protection of their guardian spirits. The verse given in the *Dextra Pars Oculi* may be Englished thus:

O angel who my guardian art,
Thro' God's paternal love;
Defend and shield and rule the charge,
Assigned thee from above.

From vice's stain preserve my soul,
O gentle angel bright;
In all my life be thou my stay,
To all my steps the light.

Then follow the various modes of absolving from excommunication, &c., and in this connection copies of the reserved cases, with the *Magna Carta* and the *Carta de Foresta*, the keeping of which was enforced in A.D. 1254 by ecclesiastical censures.

The second part of the *Dextra Pars Oculi* deals minutely and carefully with the instructions which a priest should give his people, not only as to matters of belief, but as to decorum and behaviour in church, cemetery, &c. These materials for instructions are arranged under some thirty-one headings. Following on this are the explanations of the familiar instructions which priests were bound to give to their people four times a year and sermons on various subjects, chiefly on *Temptations*.

In another treatise closely resembling this *Pars Oculi Sacerdotis*—so closely, indeed, that it has sometimes been mistaken for a portion of it—is the better known *Pupilla Oculi* of John de Burgo, or Borough, Rector of Collingham, in A.D. 1385. It was only to a certain extent original, for, as the author states in his Preface, he has called it *Pupilla Oculi*, "because it is to a large extent drawn from another work entitled *Oculus Sacerdotis*." This manual also was evidently much in demand by the clergy. Numerous manuscript copies of it are in existence, and it has been printed several times. One edition, that of A.D. 1510, was issued from the press by the printer Wolffgang at the expense of an English merchant of London named William Bretton, and was sold, as the title-page sets forth, at Pepwell's bookshop in St. Paul's Churchyard.[1] Both the *Pars Oculi* and the *Oculus Sacerdotis* bear a close resemblance to another tract called *Regimen*

The third part of the volume, entitled the *Sinistra Pars Oculi*, is in fact a careful treatise on the sacraments. The instructions upon the Blessed Eucharist are especially good, and in the course of them many matters of English practice are touched upon and explanation is given of the ceremonies of the Mass.

[1] Its full title is *Pupilla oculi omnibus presbyteris precipue Anglicanis necessaria.* On the back of the title-page of the 1510 edition is a letter from Augustine Aggeus to W. Bretton. After saying that societies exist to propagate books, the author declares that Bretton has been induced to print the *Pupilla* by a desire that the rites and sacraments of the Church should be better known, and to secure "that nowhere in the English Church" these rites should be badly observed or understood. It is clear from the letter that W. Bretton had already had other works printed in the same way, and it is known that amongst those works were copies of Lyndwode's *Provinciale* (1505), *Psalterium et Hymni* (1506), *Horæ*, &c. (1506), *Speculum Spiritualium*, and Hampole, *De Emendatione Vitæ* (1510), (cf. *Ames*, Ed. Herbert, iii. p. 16). Pepwell, the publisher, at *the sign of the Holy Trinity*, was the same who published many books printed abroad, and had dealings with Bishops Stokesley and Tunstall.

Animarum,[1] which was apparently compiled as early as A.D. 1343.

Another sample of these priests' manuals, chiefly intended to furnish material for popular instruction, is a fourteenth-century tract called the *Speculum Christiani*. It was composed by one John Watton with the distinct purpose, as the Preface informs us, of aiding the clergy in giving the teaching commanded by the Constitutions of Archbishop Peccham. In many ways the *Speculum Christiani* is the most useful and important of this class of manuals. A considerable portion is given in English, each division, for example, being prefaced by simple rhymes in the vernacular, giving the chief points to be borne in mind. In fifteenth-century sermons I have frequently met with these rude rhymes, introduced into the text of a discourse, as if they were perfectly well known to the audience. At haphazard I take a couple of examples. The First Commandment is summed up thus :

> Thou shalt love thy God with heart entire,
> With all thy soul and all thy might,

[1] The prologue to the *Regimen Animarum* (Harl. MS. 2272, fol. 2) says the work is compiled chiefly from the *Summa Summarum Raymundi*, *Summa Confessorum*, *Veritates Theologie*, *Pars oculi Sacerdotis*, &c. The work is divided into three parts : (1) *De Moribus et scientia presbyterorum et aliorum clericorum*, (2) *De exhortationibus et doctrinis bonis erga subditos suos faciendis*, (3) *De septem Sacramentis*.

In the second part the priest is urged to instruct his people constantly *in English*, and no one who will examine this portion can fail to be struck at the minute character of these instructions. It may be noted that at fol. 91*b* the priest is urged to teach his people to bow at the Sacred Name, and to add the name *Jesus* to the end of the *Ave Maria*, and to explain to them the Indulgences granted to such as do so by Popes John XXII. and Urban IV.

The third part begins, in this copy, at fol. 132, and treats the sacraments most fully. In speaking of *Confirmation*, the necessity of *consecrated* oil is insisted upon. The volume closes with a description and explanation of the Canon of the Holy Mass.

And other God in no manner
Thou shalt not have by day nor night.

And the precept of keeping holy certain days is prefaced by the following:

Thy holy days keep well also,
From worldly works take thou thy rest;
All thy household the same shall do,
Both wife and child, servant and beast.

The number of copies of the *Speculum Christiani* to be found in the Museum collection of MSS. is some ten or twelve, and this may be taken as evidence of its popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It was translated into English by one John Byrd in the latter century, and was one of the earliest books ever put into type in England. An edition was printed in London by William of Machlin, at the expense of a London merchant, about A.D. 1480, and in the first decade of the sixteenth century it was reprinted, but without the English verses, at least three times.[1] I cannot pass from a brief notice of this excellent manual of instructions without pointing out that in it may be found some beautiful prayers to the Blessed Sacrament and our Lady, which were formerly used by our Catholic ancestors. The English verses beginning:

Mary Mother, wel thou bee,
Mary Mother, think on me,

I should like to see reprinted, and, indeed, the entire

[1] The Museum has four printed copies: (1) the supposed print of 1480; (2) a copy of 1500, printed at Paris; (3) another of 1502; and (4) one printed by Thomas Rees, A.D. 1513, in London. The later copies have no English verses; but that they were intended for English use seems clear from the fact that the prologue to the volume, in which the author says that it is intended to furnish priests with material for the instructions they are bound to give by the Constitutions of Peccham, is reprinted.

manual deserves to be better known than it is amongst us to-day.[1]

Space obliges me to pass rapidly on to the second point for our consideration—that of preaching proper in the two centuries before the Reformation era. I would, however, ask you to believe that the question of popular instruction has only been touched upon. I could give many other examples of manuals such as I have here introduced to notice, and I have said nothing whatever of what may be called formal theological text-books, all of which were, of course, calculated to aid the clergy, in what the great Grosseteste calls, "as much a part of the *cura pastoralis* as the administration of the sacraments." I must, however, give one word of warning. When writers talk of people being taught their *Pater*, something very different is meant from the mere repetition of the words. A large number of systematic instructions during the middle ages were based upon the explanation of the Our Father. Any one who may care to pursue this subject cannot but be amazed at the ingenious way the petitions of the Lord's

[1] Besides the volumes named in the text there are a considerable number of works of much the same kind. One such is the *Flos Florum*, a copy of which is among the Burney MS. (No. 356) in the British Museum. It is divided into five-and-twenty books, the first being occupied with an explanation of the Lord's Prayer; the second with a tract on the virtues and vices; the third with an account of the priest's personal duties; the fifth with notes on the teaching which parish priests are bound to give to their people.—Another book is called *Cilium Oculi Sacerdotis*, and is divided into two parts. The first treats about clerical duties, and especially of the duties of a confessor; the second part is a tract upon the Ten Commandments. Here, as in so many similar works, some interesting points of practice in Catholic England are touched upon. For example, we read that every rector of a parish should have a cleric to assist him at the public Mass, and to read the Epistle. This cleric may be vested in an alb, and besides Church duty should teach the children their creed, "*id est*, their faith," and their "letters," besides "teaching the singing." (Harl. MS. 4968.)

Prayer are made the pegs on which to hang a definite course of teaching on the whole of Christian doctrine.[1]

It is impossible to consider the subject of that systematic religious instruction which was constantly being repeated in mediæval times without wondering whether it had its proper effect upon the minds of the people. The proof of the wisdom of our forefathers is, I think, sufficiently evidenced by the history of the change of religion throughout Europe in the sixteenth century. In other words (confining our attention to England), the way in which the Catholic faith had to be uprooted from the minds of the people is surely a proof that they had been well grounded in it. Now that the real facts are becoming known it is beginning to be suspected in several quarters that the change of religion was brought about, not by the spontaneous acceptance by the people of Protestantism in place of the Catholic faith, but by a process of systematic and deliberate religious starvation. And taking a comprehensive survey, the Reformation in Europe, as a whole, was by no means a popular movement ; but, for the most part, the new faith was only, after many a struggle, imposed upon nations by force and the will of the Prince.

But let us turn to the question of *sermons* in the later middle ages. The work of instruction may be

[1] Harl. MS. 1648, for example, is an instance of a book of instructions in Christian doctrine founded upon the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. It is arranged in tabular form, and is most ingeniously devised to convey a great amount of solid instruction. The key to the arrangement is on fol. 1 *b*, where it is said, "Per istas septem petitiones impetrantur septem dona Spiritus Sancti, que extrahunt a corde septem peccata mortalia et plantant in corde septem virtutes principales que nos perducunt ad septem beatitudines et ad eorum merita."

said roughly to have been the special office of the secular clergy. In the same general way preaching may be regarded as coming within the special province of the Religious Orders. Of course in such general statements the limit must be taken as understood; and as a fact, at the outset, it is necessary to guard ourselves against the impression that, because the friars gave a great impulse to popular preaching, it began with them; just as it is useful to guard against the notion that it was Wicliff who introduced the preaching of vernacular sermons. Indeed, unless the accounts of the preaching of the friars in the thirteenth century are mere myths, of this latter there can be no question whatever. The Dominicans and Franciscans were essentially popular preachers in the truest sense of the word. They went from village to village speaking to the people wherever they could, in public places as well as in the churches. They gathered their audiences together on the great roadways as readily as in consecrated spots. For the most part they had to do with the masses, and plain, unadorned speaking was their *forte*. As a rule they made no attempt at set and polished discourses, refraining from elaborate argument or the discussion of abstract questions. They extemporized their teaching, suiting it to the needs of the moment, and pointing their moral with anecdotes, fables, and examples. Hence their triumph. The people followed them in crowds, hung upon their words, were carried away by their earnest—albeit perhaps rough—eloquence, and made their conquest easy. But even the friars (a century and a half be it noted before Wicliff's "poor priests") by no means commenced, though they certainly gave an impetus to, the practice

of vernacular preaching. From the earliest times the people were spoken to in the language they could understand. St. Bede, for example, describes the crowds of Saxons who flocked to their churches to hear the words of the Christian missionaries. What has misled so many writers, apparently, is the fact that the sermons which have been preserved to us from the middle ages are for the most part in Latin. This is true; but it is no less a fact that the preachers of those days used to compose discourses in Latin which they afterwards delivered in English, a practice which I fear might seem strange, or even intolerable, to the immense majority of the Anglican country clergymen, who in these more cultured days have received the best education the national Universities can afford.

In the same way as the work of instruction proper took a fixed form, so that of preaching was fashioned on a well-understood and well-recognized model. A short exordium, following upon the chosen text of Scripture, led almost invariably to a prayer for Divine guidance and assistance, which concluded with the *Pater* and *Ave*, and only then did the preacher address himself to the development of his subject. For the most part, until comparatively recent times, which have introduced somewhat strange themes into the sacred pulpit, the sermon was based almost entirely upon the Bible, and generally upon the Gospel, or other Scripture, proper for the day. This practice, whilst it imbued the minds of those who listened with a thorough knowledge of the sacred writings, gives the sermons as we read them now so great a similarity that we are apt to regard them as generally dull and uninteresting.

With rare exceptions it is clear that, in England at least, brilliant, startling, and sensational sermonizing was not regarded with favour, but, on the contrary, was looked on with suspicion, as savouring of the "treatise," or method of the schools, and founded on the practice of heretics.

Numerous tracts of the art of preaching, drawn up for the use of our English preachers during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are still to be seen in our public libraries. I shall here only refer to one, written somewhere in the middle of the fourteenth century by the celebrated Dominican, Thomas Waleys, in order to teach the mode and form of pulpit oratory, in what he then describes as the "modern style." The whole tract is instructive, but I will here give only a brief epitome of the first chapter, which treats of "the preacher." He should, the master declares, undertake the duty, not from vanity or love of notoriety, but from pure love of God's truth; and prayer and study should go before his work. As to his gestures, he should endeavour not to stand like a statue, nor to throw himself about regardless of decorum. He is to refrain from shouting, and not to speak so low that his audience have to strain to catch his words. He is not to speak too rapidly, not to hesitate "like a boy who repeats lessons he does not quite understand." The theme should be spoken with great distinctness, so that all may understand the subject, and, if necessary, it should be repeated. Before his discourse the preacher should retire to some private place and thoroughly practise the sermon he is about to deliver, with the method of declamation, the gestures, and even the expressions of countenance suitable to its various

parts. Finally, the author urges the advisability of having some candid and reliable friend to listen to the discourse, who will correct the faults of pronunciation, &c., when it is over. This is not such bad advice to preachers, given at a time when we are asked to believe that sermons were almost unknown.[1]

Turning to the material aids to the intending preacher, we can describe them — even in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—as really vast. Confining our attention, of course, to England only, we may, in the first place, note some collections of sermons for Sundays and feast-days very popular in the fifteenth century. The first course of such sermons I will mention is that drawn up by John Felton, the Vicar of St. Mary Magdalen and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. His discourses won for him the name of *homiliarius*, or *concionator*, and his course of Sunday sermons—some fifty-eight in number, and of which there are many copies among the Museum manuscripts—were much used by subsequent preachers. In his Preface our author states, that on account of the poverty of those who are students in moral and dogmatic theology, and con-

[1] Friar Waleys, in other places in this tract—*De Arte Predicandi*—gives much excellent advice from which we may cull one or two points. Speaking of the *subject* of a sermon, he says that it is the custom (*consuetudo apud modernos*) always to have some text upon which to found a discourse. This should be a real theme, taken from Holy Scripture, and always from the Lesson, Epistle, or Gospel of the day, except on great feasts, such as Easter. Generally it should be a sentence, but sometimes it is best to take the whole Epistle or Gospel and explain its meaning, for "this kind of preaching is easy and very often greatly profitable to ordinary people." The author warns the preacher that he is not to think sermons are merely arguments; a discourse should not only convince the mind, but lead it to good affections and implant in it devout thoughts. He urges priests never to finish a sermon without some mention of our Lady, Christ's Passion, or eternal happiness.

sequently by reason of the few books they are able to obtain to help them, he has been induced by the importunity of friends to draw up, for the use of any priest having the cure of souls, a course of sermons founded on the Gospels of the Sundays. "They are," he adds, "merely the crumbs I have collected as they have fallen from the tables of my masters, whose names I have given in the margin." A note in one of the copies among the Harleian MSS. says that the sermons were published in the year 1431.[1] They are, I fancy, for our modern taste too much divided and subdivided, and I have little doubt they would be to-day voted "dry." Various authorities are cited in the margin, as for example Waleys', the *Vitæ Patrum*, &c., and stories are frequently introduced to drive home a point, or fix the attention on a moral. Although the series is complete, I fancy the discourses were really intended rather as a help to the priest in the preparation of his Sunday sermon than as a collection of sermons to be preached exactly as they are set down. The stories, for example, are often mere indications of what were then doubtless well-known anecdotes, but the memory of which has

[1] In one copy of these *Sermones Dominicales* (Harl. MS. 868, fol. 2) is the following note: "In nomine Dni nri Ihu Xpe cui sit honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen. Hoc opus completum fuit a venerabili viro Domino, Johe Felton, vicario perpetuo ecclesiæ paroch. Beate Marie Magdalene, Oxon; Lincoln dioc. in anno Dne: Mcccxxxi." Leland says of John Felton: "He was an eager student of philosophy and theology; (yet) the mark towards which he earnestly pressed with eye and mind was none other than that by his continual exhortations he might lead the dwellers on the Isis from the filth of their vices to the purity of virtue." Besides the *Sermones Dominicales*, in some copies (*e.g.* Harl. MS. 5396, fols. 143—209) there is another collection of fifty sermons of a more miscellaneous nature. In his illustrative stories he uses Pliny, Seneca, &c., freely, and as a rule the sermon is shorter than the more formal discourse for the Sunday. Besides set sermons, Felton drew up for the use of preachers and other teachers an *Alphabetum Theologicum*, from the works of Bishop Grosseteste.

long since perished. Especially is this the case where English and local examples are referred to, as: "Note about the man in Bristol;" or, "About the woman in London, to whom our Lord showed His Heart." At the end of every copy of these Sunday discourses I have examined, there is a careful and copious subject-index; and many indications are given, by subsequent sermon-writers, of the influence of this collection upon the preaching of the age.

Another set of sermons, evidently much in use in the fifteenth century, and many copies of which are still in existence, is that known as the *Liber Festivalis* of John Mirk, a Canon Regular of Lilleshull. This author is perhaps best known by his tract entitled *Instructions for Parish Priests*, which was published some years ago by the Early English Text Society. He lived much about the same time as Felton, namely, about the middle of the fifteenth century, and his sermons were intended for use on the higher festivals of the Christian year. I should like to quote a few words of his Preface, putting it, however, into modern English.

> God, maker of all things [he says], be at our beginning, and give us all His blessing, and bring us all to a good ending, Amen. By my own feeble lecture I feel how it fareth with others that are in the same degree (as I am), who having charge of souls are obliged to teach their parishioners on all the principal feasts of the year. But many have as excuse, the want of books and the difficulty of reading, and therefore to help such mean clerks, as I am myself, I have drawn this treatise.

The sermons themselves are short, and frequently afford interesting information as to Catholic practices

in those days. There is always one anecdote, and often there are two or more, and whilst many of these may perhaps appear to us somewhat grotesque and absurd, a study of the whole series of sermons cannot but impress us with a belief that the priest who could use them must have been upon terms of most familiar intercourse with his people, and unless religious instruction had been constantly and regularly given, he never could have talked to them as he is made to do in these sermons.[1]

The *Liber Festivalis*, printed by Caxton in A.D. 1483, although by no means identical with John Mirk's, is practically founded upon it. It has sermons for nineteen Sundays and ferias, commencing with the first Sunday of Advent and ending with Corpus Christi day. These are followed by discourses for

[1] A few extracts from some of these popular instructions on the feasts of the Church may be given. The following, addressed, as the rubric directs, at the *Tenebræ*, or Office of Matins, on the last days of Holy Week, after the Hours were finished, and "before the discipline is given to the people," was to be addressed to them; "good men and women, as you see, these three days, the service is said at eventide in darkness. Wherefore it is called among you *tenabulles*, but Holy Church calleth it *tenebras*, that is to say, 'darkness,' and why this service is performed in darkness the holy Fathers assign three reasons," &c. The people are then urged to be present at these services, and to obey the common practice of coming to them in silence and thinking upon Christ's Passion.

In the instruction on Maundy Thursday, after explaining that the Church calls it "Our Lord's Supper day," the author continues: "It is also in Englis tong schere thursday, for in owr olde fadur dayes men wolden yt day makon sheron hem honest, and dode here hedes and clyppon here berdes and so makon hem honest agen astur day; for ye moroze yei woldon done here body non ese, but suffur penaunce, in mynde of Hym yt suffurd so harte for hem. On Saturday thai myghte nozte whyle, what for long service, what for othur occupacion that thai haddon for the weke comynge," &c. In the sermons there are many indications of Catholic practice, as for example, that procession was made to the font of the church for the seven days after its blessing on Holy Saturday. In the short instruction on the Assumption, the author introduces a hymn to our Blessed Lady, which he urges his audience to learn by heart and constantly repeat.

forty-three of the chief holidays and saints' days of the year, and one sermon, suited for the anniversary of the dedication of a parish church. Then come somewhat detailed explanations of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Commandments, &c. At the close of the fifteenth century the general popularity of the *Liber Festivalis* may be gauged by the fact that it was printed twice by Caxton, twice by Wynkyn de Worde, twice by Pynson, once by an English printer, whose name is unknown, in A.D. 1486, and thrice abroad before the close of the century.

The foregoing are samples of the many collections of sermons—chiefly for the Sundays of the year—which were clearly used by the English preachers in discharge of their duty of teaching, in the later middle ages. But besides these collected sermons, which might be either used to draw material from, or preached just as they stood, there were many books intended for the purpose of helping priests in the preparation of their discourses. As an example of these aids to preachers, we may take the well-known *Summa Predicantium*, drawn up by the English Dominican, John Bromyard, about the beginning of the fifteenth century. There is a good copy in the King's Library at the British Museum, which formerly belonged to the Rochester Monastic Library. The book—a very large thick folio volume—is drawn up alphabetically, and information can thus be obtained with the greatest facility on most matters upon which a preacher is likely to need instruction. An examination of its contents will prove to any one who doubts that it must have been a mine of wealth to a priest engaged in the work of preaching. Bromyard's

work was printed abroad, twice in the fifteenth century and again in the middle of the sixteenth.[1]

Another work, similar to the *Summa Predicantium*, was drawn up by Alan of Lynn, a Carmelite, who wrote much in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The mere list of his works fills the best part of a closely-printed page of Tanner, and a large portion of his labours was directed to lighten the work of preachers in the preparation of their sermons. Of course the writers of the period drew much, especially on all matters concerning natural history, from the work of Bartholomew the Englishman—sometimes called Glanville—a Minorite friar who taught in France during the thirteenth century. His book, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, alongside of that of Vincent of Beauvais, was the Encyclopædia of the middle ages, and all his facts were arranged with a moral and religious object. It was translated into English by Trevisa in A.D. 1398, and had been printed in fourteen or fifteen editions before the year 1500.[2]

[1] The theological *common-place books* which still exist in MS. prove that the clergy often took great pains to adapt their studies to the work of teaching. To take an example: Harl. MS. 2344, is a theological note-book certainly used, and possibly drawn up in the fifteenth century by one John Chapman, "Rector of Honey Lane," London. Chapman was a doctor in theology, and, from 1493 to 1505, appears to have sometimes occupied the pulpit at St. Paul's Cross, since he gives, on the first leaf of his note-book, a list of his sermons delivered in that celebrated London pulpit. The interest of the small volume lies in the fact that it is a collection of notes on a great variety of theological matters. They are in a form which would probably be considered most useful for referring to. In the margin a number is set against each *distinction*, thus, | 71 , and at the end is an alphabetical index—*e.g.*, *De Pilati et Herodis concordia mistice intellecta* | 71 |.

[2] The work of another Dominican, Robert Holcot, called *Pro Christi verbum Evangelizantibus*, deserves to be mentioned as much used in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Wood states that Holcot was "first a lawyer, and afterwards a Friar Preacher." He studied at

In sermons of the period about which we are engaged, I have met with many references to a work evidently very similar to Bromyard's *Summa*, called the *Alphabetum Predicantium.* The work also of another English Dominican, Nicholas Gorham—*Thema et distinctiones* — furnished not only the skeleton for a sermon, but material wherewith to clothe it, arranged alphabetically and with a good index of words. The influence of Gorham can be traced in the preachers whose works have come down to us (although, by the way, his name is not even mentioned in the great *Dictionary of National Biography*).[1] One northern priest, Robert Ripon, probably a monk of Durham, for example, is constantly quoting him as his authority. The volume of sermons by this Durham monk may be noted in passing. It is not a complete course, but a somewhat miscellaneous collection. The Sundays of Lent, for example, and those of the spring quarter, have often as many as eight sermons for a single day, and there are some six or eight discourses preached at various Synods at Durham. In one of these the preacher

Oxford, and was the friend of Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham. He was a great lecturer on Holy Scripture, and is said, with some probability, to have been the real author of the *Philobiblion*, now claimed for Richard de Bury. His work in aid of preachers was printed in Paris in 1510 and 1513. Besides this a small work, which may be described as skeleton sermons for the *Themata Dominicalia*, was drawn up by him, and is known as the *Dicta Salutis*. Seven or eight copies of this work are among the British Museum MSS. Holcot died in the fatal year of the great plague, 1349.

[1] Gorham was certainly an Englishman (see Tanner). He was apparently first a fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and subsequently became a Dominican, and, going abroad, was confessor to Philip the Fair of France. He taught much in Paris, and was esteemed an eloquent preacher. He died in A.D. 1298. The Sunday sermons in Harl. MS. 755, fols. 1—148, were attributed by Warley to Gorham, at least in part. His book of Dominical sermons was printed at Paris in 1509, under the title of the *Golden Foundation*.

strongly urges upon all who have the care of souls a diligent study of the Bible, for he says: "Curates are bound to have a knowledge of Scripture, for preaching the Word of God to their people." Running through all the sermons *de Synodis*, moreover, is the same plain demand for learning and piety of life on the part of the priest, and the same insistance upon the obligation they were under to preach constantly to their people.

The study of Scripture urged by this northern preacher must certainly have been practised throughout the whole period of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We have remarked before that the sermons were, as a rule, Scriptural expositions, illustrated chiefly from the Holy Writ, and it is impossible to read them without rising from the study with a profound belief in the detailed knowledge of the Bible possessed alike by priest and people. The clergy from early times had vast storehouses, both of Biblical and Patristic knowledge in the great *glossed* texts, which, together with the words of Scripture, presented the interpretations given by the chief Fathers of the Church. Before the close of the fourteenth century, moreover, the great value of an index for the purposes of study had been recognized in England, and many earnest workers had devoted their energies mainly to throwing open, by means of their *tabulæ*, or indexes, what had hitherto been unworked and closed mines of buried knowledge. The value of this all-important labour has not been sufficiently recognized in the past; but, amongst those conspicuous in this work, we may name Alan, the Carmelite, of Lynn, and later than him, Abbot Whethamsted of St. Albans. A glance at the works

of the former will show all that he did in this matter. Concordances and subject-indexes to the Bible, specially for the use of preachers, were multiplied in the early part of the fifteenth century; and the works of the Fathers, chronicles, and even the sermons of such a comparatively recent preacher as Bishop Grosseteste, had copious and well-arranged indexes made to them.

Whilst upon this subject I cannot refrain from calling attention to the great Catalogue of Monastic and Collegiate Libraries of England, drawn up in the fourteenth century by a monk of Edmundsbury "for the use and profit," as he says, "of students and preachers." For this reason it was called by him a *Promptuarium.* The list is arranged so that by the help of numbers attached to each monastery it might at once be seen where any given work could be found in the English fourteenth century libraries. Thus, for example, suppose a student or preacher wished to consult the sermons of St. Anselm, a glance at Boston of Bury's list would show him the numbers 89, 43, 19, 116, 166, and 65 placed against the title of this work. Turning next to the key list of monastic libraries he would at once be able to tell that complete copies were to be seen in the libraries of Bermondsey, Woburn, St. Paul's London, Shrewsbury, Hexham, and Ramsey. The use made of this catalogue for preaching purposes is evidenced by the way in which the Franciscans subsequently arranged the list of libraries for their own members, to correspond with the seven "Custodies," or divisions, into which the Franciscan Province of England was apportioned. But, although no account of the preaching in the two centuries, before the change of

religion, would have been complete without some mention of this gigantic work of Boston of Bury, I have been able, of course, merely to refer to it. To do justice to it, the subject would require an article to itself.

Before passing away from the question of material aids to preachers in the later mediæval period, it is proper to advert briefly to the various collections of stories intended to adorn and lighten the dulness of ordinary discourses. Tales, examples, and even fables with moral applications were apparently introduced into the pulpit in very early times. From the days of St. Gregory the Great the practice of pointing a moral by the relation of an anecdote is clearly evidenced, but its ordinary use may be said to date from the rise of the Dominicans in the thirteenth century. Very shortly afterwards collections of "histories," suitable for the purpose, began to appear. In A.D. 1294, for example, a Dominican, Etienne de Besancon, composed his *Alphabetum exemplorum*, believing, as he says in his Preface, that "an example is more efficacious than the most subtle preaching." From the first the authorities were urgent as to the need of caution in the use of these embellishments, but the practice once introduced soon became general. Even before the close of the thirteenth century Dante refers, with some regret, to the growing habit of making people laugh in sermons. But Chaucer's *pardoner* knew well the taste of lay people for pulpit stories when he says:

> For lewed (*i.e.*, unlearned) people loven tales olde.

The well-known *Gesta Romanorum*, probably of English origin, the *Vitæ Patrum* and the lives of the

saints generally, furnished the mediæval preacher with ample material for his anecdotes, and many collections of appropriate stories, arranged under useful moral headings, were at hand to assist him. Local colouring is often met with, and several volumes of *Historettes* for English preachers, drawn up in the fourteenth century, are known. Quite recently one such work, by a hitherto unknown English Franciscan writer, Nicholas Bozon, has been published in France; and the evident common origin of stories found in sermons of the fifteenth century shows, as we should have expected, that there was no lack of material of this kind.

I have pointed out that for the most part parochial sermons were founded upon Scripture—chiefly upon the Scripture proper for the Sunday—upon which they were preached. There are, however, of course, many examples of set discourses at this period upon other, and, as some may think, more entertaining themes. The subject is so vast that I can give but few examples of such sermons. The first collection of English set discourses I recall to mind, not to speak of the great Grosseteste, is that of the sermons of the celebrated Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh—a learned man, best known, perhaps, as the uncompromising opponent of the privileges claimed by the Mendicant Friars.[1] Although written in

[1] FitzRalph was born at Dundalk, co. Louth. Some of his early life was spent in the household of that learned lover of books, Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham. Amongst his companions here were Thomas Bradwardine, afterwards Archbishop, Walter Burley, and Robert Holcot, afterwards the celebrated Dominican preacher. When, as Archbishop of Armagh, FitzRalph was asked to preach at St. Paul's upon the great question of the friars' privileges, Richard Kilmington, also an old friend of his, was Dean. In his work, *Defensio Curatorum*, the Archbishop says that having come to London on business connected with his see, he found great disputes going on between the secular

Latin, the discourses were, as they expressly state, preached in English. Many were delivered in the choir of Lichfield Cathedral during the time FitzRalph was Dean; others were preached in the cemetery of the hospital, in the Chapel of St. Nicholas, and elsewhere in the city and neighbourhood; whilst others again were delivered at St. Paul's Cross, London, and at various other places in England and Ireland. It may seem somewhat strange, perhaps, that the sermons of so well-known a man as FitzRalph have never been printed, but such is the case. I note that on more than one occasion FitzRalph, preaching about the year 1340, is said to have commenced his sermon by reading the whole Gospel in English—an interesting and significant fact. The most celebrated of these discourses were preached in A.D. 1356 at St. Paul's Cross, and in them he fiercely attacked the friars' privileges. They are certainly bold and vigorous enough in their language, and we cannot but be astonished at the way the Archbishop, speaking on behalf of the Bishops of England, could possibly have addressed himself to so burning a question in the public pulpit at St. Paul's. We judge, however, that he was not entirely free from interruption, for he tells us himself that in reply to an objection raised

clergy and the Mendicant Orders, and after much pressing he consented to preach on the subject at the Cross, *in vulgari*, some eight sermons. His propositions gave great offence to the Minorites, and he was summoned to Rome to answer their accusations. His chief contention appears to be that people ought to confess to their parish priest in their parish church at least once a year, just as they were bound to make their offerings in their own parish church twice or three times yearly. He complains that the friars used their faculties to entice children to join them, and that once they entered their ranks not even parents were allowed to see their sons except in the presence of professed friars. He adds that, for fear of the influence exerted by members of the Mendicant Orders, parents were beginning to hesitate about sending their children to Oxford.

by a friend of the friars in one of these celebrated sermons, he replied: "If you will prove that our Lord ever really begged His bread, I will give you this Bible I hold in my hand."

St. Paul's Cross, be it remarked by the way, at that time and for many years before, "of which there is no memory," says Stowe, was the most celebrated pulpit in England. Some of the sermons preached there help us to realize a scene now long passed away, and to fix a spot upon which, in ages past, so many London audiences have gathered to listen to the voice of the most renowned preachers of the time. The very memory of the spot has almost faded away. It stood—a raised platform beneath a great timber cross—in the open air, and in the midst of the chief burial-ground of the metropolis. There, except in bad weather, when the covered space, called "the shrowds," was used, the great English sermons of the day were preached; and the site often suggested a moral to the speaker. "The audience of the dead bodies under your feet," one is reported to have said, "is as great and greater, as good and better, than you."

Learned and greatly interesting as are the sermons of Archbishop FitzRalph, they cannot, in my estimation, compare with those of another English preacher, whose name I need not give, who lived but a few years later, and who often occupied the pulpit at St. Paul's Cross, and must have deeply stirred the hearts of his audience by his exceptional eloquence. His sermons are, I fancy, but little known, but there are more than two hundred and fifty of them in existence. Though preached in English, they were written in free or even elegant Latin, and, if only by

reason of the many historical and topical allusions to be found in them, they fully deserve a place among the monuments of our national literature. I only wish that time would permit me to quote a few samples, not only of this preacher's eloquence, but of the manly vigour with which he publicly attacked abuses, even in the highest places in the land.

The foregoing are imperfect, and, I admit most fully, but detached specimens of the information which lies ready at hand, but which, I fear, is little attended to either by the popular writer or the learned historian. In fact, the difficulty is quite to realize how best to bring home to people the truth in matters such as these. We have been so long accustomed to round assertions, evidently based upon fancy rather than on fact, that in treating a matter such as this, I myself feel as if I were exaggerating, and so hardly know how to deal with, or even justly to appreciate, the facts which crowd themselves upon the mind of any one who will take the trouble—the patient trouble—to inquire. Thus, in this supposed era of "no preaching," I find that, taking only those who have left evidence in the shape of written collections of sermons, the names of at least two hundred sermon-writers are known to us as having lived and written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Most of these, moreover, be it remarked, are Carmelites, the least numerous of the four Mendicant Orders. Are we to suppose that this phenomenon is due to the fact that the Carmelites had in Bale a capable bibliographer, or rather that, whilst the members of the Order of Mount Carmel preached, the other Mendicants were all the time "dumb dogs"? On Mr. Lilly's hypothesis this latter is the

more probable alternative. For my own part I am inclined to think that the record of a vast mass of sermon literature of the two periods previous to the Reformation has perished, simply because the Franciscans and Dominicans, not to mention the other great Orders, possessed no Bale to register their sermon-writers. Still less fortunate, of course, would be the secular clergy, who did not form a corporate body with corporate interests. Hence I would conclude that the list of preachers and sermon-writers during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (given in, say, Pitts or Tanner) only contains a proportion—in fact, I may say a small portion—of those who actually lived in that period. Yet even this list contains a very respectable number of names.

It must be long before even a fair sketch of the history of preaching and instruction in England during the later middle ages can be drawn. Even in the British Museum alone it is necessary to examine and weigh the contents of some hundreds of manuscript volumes. It is a case of which we may truly say *labor est ante nos.* But already one or two points of importance stand out clearly from a background of much that is yet vague. First and foremost, it is certainly untrue that religious instruction, in the highest sense of the word, was neglected in pre-Reformation England. Next to this is the prominence given to familiar instruction, as distinct from preaching, and the importance which in Catholic days was attached to the constant—the perpetual reiteration of the same lessons of faith and practice. It may be said that this must have produced a certain sense of sameness, and that education has altered matters in our own times. In point of fact,

however, no amount of education really affects these truths, still less does it advance them. The only question is, how best the truths of religion are impressed upon the mind. I must own to a belief that at the present day our Catholic people have not that clear understanding nor that firm grasp of the great simple truths of their religion which they ought to have. Nor need we be astonished if this be the case: for is there much exaggeration in the statement that after leaving school Catholics now seldom receive regular and systematic instruction upon the elements of faith and practice during the rest of their lives? Here we are living in the midst of Protestants, and I would ask if, when the whole nation was Catholic and had been so for generations, when the very atmosphere which Englishmen breathed was impregnated with Catholicity, it was considered necessary never to cease repeating instructions of what, for lack of a better expression, I may call "the Penny Catechism type," it can be safe in these days of vagueness and latitudinarianism to rely—I may say exclusively—for the teaching of our people on the formality of set sermons?

Of course I must not be understood as wishing unduly to obtrude these considerations; but in investigating the history of religion among the English people many doubts such as these force themselves on the attention of the inquirer, and many a practical question is raised in his mind of which at the outset he had no suspicion.

Auguste Marceau.

(1806–1851.)

By Lady Amabel Kerr.

Auguste Marceau was born in Paris in 1806, at a time most eventful to every Frenchman. France, having recovered her balance after the shock of the great Revolution, found herself in the position of being regarded as the natural enemy of every reigning dynasty in Europe. Full of enthusiasm and renewed vigour, she faced the situation. Under the strong, despotic rule of Napoleon Buonaparte, who assumed supreme control over her affairs, she achieved an almost unparalleled military renown, and for a time nearly all Europe was cowering at her feet. Every national resource was drained to maintain her victorious position; life and property being freely and unhesitatingly sacrificed for that end.

Auguste, like most French boys of the time, imbibed the prevailing military spirit in his very infancy, and grew up possessed by one idea in life—the desire to be a soldier. His military ardour was, however, doomed to disappointment, and for the strangest of reasons. An uncle of his had, at the end of the eighteenth century, attained to some celebrity as a general under the French Republic, and the family pride of young Marceau's relatives would not permit

him to enter a profession where the superior fame of his uncle and namesake might eclipse his own. "My dear boy," said one who had a right to legislate for Auguste's future, "you must not dream of adopting a career in which a relation of yours, bearing the very same name as yourself, has distinguished himself. You must aim at acquiring a glory quite independent and personal." Auguste, though unwillingly, accepted this argument as conclusive, and reluctantly turned his thoughts to the Navy, which he decided on entering, and in which service he achieved a personal and independent glory very different from that intended by his worldly friends and advisers.

His father had died when Auguste was a child, leaving his widow and little son and daughter almost unprovided for. Family pride was the principal legacy left by him to his children, to which, indeed, was added another, and a terrible one, hereditary infidelity. Auguste, to whom this fatal legacy was bequeathed, had not any even accidentally religious traditions to help him. Born of an unbelieving father, and of a practically unbelieving mother, he was launched into life and plunged into no common temptations without even a spark of religion which could be fanned. So completely devoid was his soul of all idea of God that after he went to sea, even in moments of utmost peril, when death seemed certain, no thought of God, or of a future life, crossed his mind. His mother, who always held the one tender spot in his heart, was his only thought.

At the time when he was a boy, it was not customary to go through any special course of preparation for the Navy. Auguste entered the service as a young man of twenty, his preliminary education being carried on at a school which was not only godless, but such a sink of moral corruption that it was notorious that a boy could not attend its classes, even as a day scholar, without being, humanly speaking, hopelessly contaminated. The principal of a Christian college, whose pupils for some unexplained reason attended the school where Marceau was, has left this painful testimony on record: "Mere contact with the boarders

was like a contagious plague, and after only two months when our boys returned to us, they were unrecognisable, and we could only weep, like Rachel, over our children, because 'they were not.'"

In this school, such as it was, and later at the Polytechnic, Auguste greatly distinguished himself. He was a young man of energy and resolve, and, being provided with very small means, was determined to make his way in the profession he had adopted. During the course of his education in Paris he took up the study of steam and machinery, then—seventy years ago—in their infancy. He spent most of his leisure time in forges and factories, and learnt nearly all there was then to be learnt. He was intelligent enough to foresee what an important part steam was likely to play in the Navy, and what a revolution its introduction would cause in vessels of war; and when he entered the Navy he was better versed in the subject than most officers in the service, many of whom, especially in the higher grades, entirely ignored the very existence of this great power of the future. Nor was young Marceau slow to recognize his own superiority, or unwilling to parade it.

He was, in 1826 appointed to the corvette *Bayonnaise*, in which ship he spent the first four years of his naval life, sailing round the world. After his return to France, and having passed his examination as officer, he, at his own request, served in various small steam vessels employed for mail service, chiefly in the Mediterranean. It was only in such insignificant vessels that he could find scope for his knowledge of steam. In 1836, after Marceau had been ten years in the Navy, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and given command of the steam-vessel *Minos*. He held the reputation of being a clever and dashing officer, and while in command of the *Minos* obtained praise and distinction, as well as the thanks of the British Government, for the manner in which he towed the *Pembroke*, an English line-of-battle ship, from among the rocks off Gibraltar, in a most fearful gale which destroyed a great deal of shipping in the Straits. He knew no fear,

and was a veritable fire-eater in his love of fighting. When, however, there was no chance of this he threw all his energies into the management of his ship, which he desired should excel all others, and he spared no pains to himself or those under his command, if only he could attract notice and gain distinction.

In spite, however, of this thirst for approbation his unbounded confidence in his own abilities and his almost audacious contempt for his superiors, which he took no pains to conceal, did not tend to make him a favourite at headquarters, or facilitate his advancement in his profession. If he was unpopular with those above him in the service, he was positively detested by those under his command. His harshness, injustice, and violent temper made his name a very by-word, and any man appointed to his ship was sure to meet with universal condolence. With his equals and fellow-officers also he was unpopular on account of his arrogance, his sneering tone and manner, and offensive airs of superiority. A Catholic officer in the Navy who knew him at this period of his life, and who was very anxious to obtain prayers for his conversion, described him as "Satan on earth;" and indeed it was as if he were possessed by a devil, and—if such a distinction be permissible—a devil of the most unattractive description!

It need scarcely be said that with a man of Marceau's ungovernable nature and fierce hatred of authority and restraint, irreligion took a very active and aggressive form. He both hated and despised the Christian religion, and took every opportunity to be insolent to those who professed it. His blasphemies were so horrible as to shock even those of his friends who were as irreligious as himself. "It seems to me," he wrote at a later period of his life, "that the devil urged me on to commit the most abominable sins, in the hope of making my return to God impossible."

Little as he was aware of the fact, and little as he would have cared had he known it, there were certain good Catholics of his acquaintance who were storming heaven for his conversion. Perhaps it was the very fierceness of his enmity to God which made them so

eager to see him conquered by grace. Their prayers were heard, and faith was awakened in his soul by the most unlooked-for means.

There was a man named Enfantin, a sort of prophet among the atheists of the day, to whom his admirers had blasphemously given the name of the Supreme Father. This man when one day discoursing to his disciples, one of the most trusting and devoted of whom was Marceau, declared in the arrogance of his self-complacency that to be a thorough follower of him, and to arrive at a proper understanding of his tenets, a man ought, as a matter of fact, to have "passed through Catholicism." These words struck Marceau, who had unlimited faith in Enfantin, and impressed him with a sense of his deficiencies. Far from having passed through Catholicism, he was unacquainted with the very simplest of its doctrines; and in obedience to the voice of his prophet he procured some Catholic books from a lady of his acquaintance, and set to work to study the Christian religion. By this means, the devil being compelled to do God's work, grace found an entrance into Auguste Marceau's soul.

He entered far more deeply into the study of Catholic truths than he had intended, and became thoroughly dissatisfied in his mind. Impatient at this result, he flung away his books, saying: "If I go on much longer I shall end by believing all this rubbish;"—but still he took them up again, and in spite of himself, belief in God found its way into his soul. "O," he cried, "how I long to give myself, body and soul, to something, but there is nothing in the wide world worthy of such a gift. God alone could satisfy my soul!" But God was not easily to be found by him who knew not how to seek, and Marceau grew miserable and hopeless. "What is the matter with you?" asked one of his friends in a ball-room at Toulon, where he was found standing apart, gloomy and sad. "I am searching for God," was his grave reply, which was met by shrieks of laughter from his gay and giddy friends.

During this time, while he himself was in search of faith, and very far from the haven, he tried, and tried

successfully, to bring his mother back to the Christian religion. As a young child she had been carefully taught by Catholic parents, but she was left an orphan at a very early age, and her girlhood and married life had been passed among unbelievers; and for years she had given up all idea of practising her religion. Faith, however, had not entirely died out of her soul, and she responded readily to her son's exhortations to turn to God alone for consolation under a great family trial which had overtaken her. He even urged and persuaded her to go to confession, though the thought of doing so himself was very far from his mind. All through his life Marceau had great influence, for good or for evil, over those with whom he was thrown, and in no case was this more powerful and remarkable than with his own mother. From the day of his conversion, and even, as has been seen, before it was completed, it may be said that Madame Marceau, on her journey heavenward, knew no law but his, so entirely did she read God's will through the medium of her son's counsels. There was no devotion he recommended, no sacrifice he suggested, that she did not promptly adopt, as if an angel from heaven had spoken to her. "O," she said in a broken-hearted letter written after his death, "he was so indispensable to my life. His example and his advice were so necessary to me. To his holy and precious letters I owe all the little good that there is in me."

But to return to Marceau himself. With his habitual self-dependence and presumption, he, having become so intellectually convinced of the main truths of Christianity as to seek to impress them on his mother and sister, considered and called himself a Christian, though, as a matter of fact, he did not fulfil any one of the most elementary duties of a Christian. A friend of his—the same good Catholic naval officer who had described him as Satan on earth—seeing certain symptoms of change in him, ventured to express the hope that he might return to God. "But I have done so!" replied Marceau proudly, being somewhat nettled by his friend's suggestion, "I am converted. I have read, I have

thought, and now I believe." "But believing is not enough," said his simple-minded friend: "you must make the sign of the cross repeatedly, as a proof of your faith." Marceau, after a little demur, accepted this test of his faith, and the officer went on: "And then you must pray." "But I cannot," returned Auguste quickly: "I know no prayers." "Anyhow," persisted his friend, "promise me that you will say the Our Father and Hail Mary." Again Marceau consented, though it was easier to make the promise than to keep it, for he did not know a word of either prayer, and it was some time before he saw fit to procure a prayer-book, in which to find them. However, he kept his word, and, once he had broken the ice, he never gave up prayer. It is interesting to know that as he knelt and prayed for the first time, there rushed across his mind the memory of a certain day, many years before, when he lay dangerously ill at Senegal. A good Catholic lady, who devoted herself to nursing him, had given him and asked him to wear a miraculous medal. He consented, but with returning health he had contemptuously thrown it aside among a heap of rubbish at the bottom of his chest. The thought of this discarded medal now haunted him, and he knew no peace till he found it and fixed it on his watch chain. It may be said that from that moment till the end of his life, he was, as will be seen, filled with the most tender devotion to Our Lady. Even then, at the beginning of his conversion, he could write thus, out of the fulness of his heart, to his mother: "Without a doubt, you—I—all of us, have been protected in a very special manner by the Blessed Virgin. To her I owe the change which has been worked in me." And yet he who wrote these words was still an outcast from God's Church. No efforts his friend could use had power to persuade him to approach the Sacraments. He desired to be a Christian, but he wished to be one after his own fashion.

A patent change had come over his life, and in the eyes of the world, and in his own estimation, he was a completely reformed man, for he had abandoned all his old evil habits, and was leading an apparently

estimable life. However, a sudden and unexpected relapse into sins which he thought he had quite overcome startled him, and convinced him of the necessity of the Sacraments in a way that no arguments could have done. But, in spite of this, he still resisted grace with all his might, until it was God's will to find the means of overcoming him.

He was staying for a night at a friend's house near Toulon, when a terrific thunderstorm burst over the place, a bolt falling only a few yards away. Marceau, as he had proved on innumerable occasions, was a man who did not know what fear meant; and storms, whether he were afloat or on shore, always had an exhilarating and exciting effect on him. But this night he was simply overcome by abject, mortal terror, seeing death as he had never seen it before. In this crushing state of fear he promised Almighty God that, if his life were spared, he would resist grace no longer; and, in fact, the very next day he sought for a priest and made his confession. Even while the storm was lasting, he proved the reality of his conversion by destroying a pamphlet on steam which he had written for publication, and in which he had scathingly, brilliantly, and mercilessly exposed the ignorance of naval authorities. The moment of peril revealed him to himself as he was, with his ruling passions of pride and arrogance. It was a lesson which he never forgot.

It was scarcely possible for a man with Auguste Marceau's antecedents to take Christianity cheerfully and joyously. He regarded himself in the light of a wild beast which had to be tamed with difficulty and by force of mere coercion; and his conflict with his passions was stern and unrelenting. None of the essentially Christian virtues came easily to him, and the great enemies of his soul, his pride and violence, met him at every turn. But he spared himself in nothing, however minute, and even had recourse to blacking his own boots as a means of mortifying his self-love. On one occasion he was so resolved to beat down his pride, which revolted against all his efforts to subdue it, that he made a pilgrimage, bare-foot, to a sanctuary six miles from Brest,

where his ship was at the time stationed, and returned through the streets of the great seaport town with his feet naked and bleeding.

With this desire for self-abasement there grew in his heart a strong love for the poor and humble, for whom he felt a deep veneration, for being, as he styled them, "the favourites of God." "I often go to Our Lady's little chapel at Recouvrance," he wrote about this time, "where I find myself in the very best society. There I meet people full of recollection, though usually covered with rags; and by this I presume that they are great friends of God. I beg His pardon for presenting myself before Him in their midst, and pray that for their sake He will listen to me."

As might have been expected, he refused to listen in anything, to the dictates of human respect and human prudence. At Lorient, when he was in command of the *Vautour*, he walked in full uniform in a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, a proceeding unheard of at that time, and which scandalized the pious world even more than the impious. Before his conversion it was the custom among even the best Catholic officers in the Navy, to go to Communion in plain clothes or, in other words, disguised; for it must be remembered that a French officer lives in his uniform, and only puts it off for purposes of concealment. Marceau alone refused to conform to this custom, and by degrees others followed his example. Nor was he more compromising in other matters. Against the advice of his Catholic friends, he insisted on making the sign of the cross when he said his grace at table. "Others," he said, with something of his old arrogance, "may eat like animals if they please. I prefer to eat like a Christian." He never consented to permit any circumstances to interfere with his observance of the Church's command as to abstinence. Whether he were dining in his own cabin, or at a state banquet, it was all the same: he ate the food prescribed unflinchingly, and, apparently, unabashed. He was heard to say that having offended God and been His enemy in so open a manner, it behoved him to act as openly as His servant. In fact,

he dreaded his old, untamed nature, and every action of his life was performed with the studied purpose of subduing it.

Marceau has left behind him pages of painful self-examination, written down day by day at this period of his life, and showing how alert he was against the former enemies of his soul. He saw them or their shadow everywhere, and was resolved that even in matters seemingly harmless, they should have no dominion over him. He never could forget the past. When trying, as he always did, to convert sinners, it was to his own example that he pointed with abhorrence. "Never," said he, when addressing a society of workmen, "do I pass through the streets, and mix with men who cannot open their lips except to blaspheme, without saying to myself, 'You were like them; you too were a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an enemy of your Lord!' But He of His mercy has had pity on me, in order by my example to encourage others never to despair."

And yet God spoke some of His sweetest secrets to this anxious and gloomy soul. God and God alone was the object of his life, and the subject of his thoughts. His love of God was so absorbing, that whenever he began to talk about Him, time flew by unperceived. There is a story told of a casual meeting at a restaurant between him and Monsieur Dupont, the holy man of Tours, the apostle of the "Holy Face." They fell to talking about God, and the hours passed by till day was succeeded by night, and finally, at midnight, the proprietor of the establishment had to rouse them, in order to shut up his house.

It was not possible that the great change in Marceau's soul should not leaven his whole life and affect his relationship with all his fellow creatures. A former messmate of his has recorded in writing the transformation wrought in him by his conversion. "His whole manner changed in a day," he says, "and from the very beginning of his conversion his humility was admirable. The signs of his interior conflict were evident, but the victory was unmistakable." It is necessary to recur to the former evil repute in which his

name was held in the service, and to remember how a sailor considered it a real calamity to be appointed to his ship, in order to understand the full significance of the fact that at a time when there was a great deal of bad feeling and mutinous spirit among the men in the French Navy, Marceau's ship, the *Pluton*, was the only one in which this spirit did not prevail. "How do you manage?" he was asked by a friend, also in command of a ship. "The men in all the other ships are ready to mutiny at the slightest provocation, but your men are always cheerful and contented." "I will give you my recipe," replied Marceau. "If I see any particle of discontent brewing among the men, I go and spend an hour or two before the Blessed Sacrament, praying for them; and, somehow, everything works right." The souls of the men under his command were the objects of his greatest solicitude. He never preached, but there was something very contagious and inspiring in his example, for by degrees oaths and bad language ceased on board, and men who, perhaps, had never mentioned the name of God except in blasphemy, took to saying their prayers.

Towards his superiors he was, of course, entirely changed, for his soul had rapidly risen to the very highest and supernatural view of authority. But whether it was that he was now reaping what he had sown before his conversion, or whether his ostentatious practice of his religion was displeasing to the authorities, certain it is that list after list of promotions was issued, and Marceau's name was passed over, men inferior to him in seniority and ability being preferred before him. Formerly his proud ambitious spirit would have rebelled against this injustice, but now he was as greedy for contempt as he had been for honours, and unaffectedly rejoiced at the slight shown to him.

One chance of distinction and promotion was offered to him, and this he forfeited by his conscientiousness. There was a certain yacht which had been built on purpose for the use of the King, Louis Philippe, who himself offered the command of her to Marceau, the offer being, of course, gladly accepted by him, as it was

a certain road to promotion. As soon, however, as he saw the little vessel, his experienced eye told him that she was built in such a manner as to be absolutely unsafe. He went to the authorities, and with his customary straightforwardness pointed out the fatal defects in the construction of the yacht, and added that his conscience would not permit him to take command of a vessel which must endanger the lives of the king and royal family. The affair became public, and competent judges were appointed to examine into the matter, with the result that the little vessel was condemned for the very reasons pointed out by Marceau. But neither those who planned the yacht, nor those who approved of the plans, were likely to forgive the man who knew more than they did, and his professional prospects were hopelessly ruined. At thirty-seven he was still a lieutenant, and so he was likely to remain.

During Marceau's service in the Mediterranean he made acquaintance at Toulon with Monseigneur Douarre, of the Order of Marists, the Vicar Apostolic of New Caledonia, who had come to France to seek assistance for the missions in Central Oceania. Zeal for souls formed a link between him and Marceau, who entered deeply into his views and expressed a strong wish to help him in any way that was in his power. It was the Bishop's design to fit out a vessel for the service of the missions. His vast diocese was composed of almost countless islands, in various stages of conversion, and in varying need of assistance; and to his mind an effective and armed ship would be the best means of keeping up communication with, and assisting the scattered missionaries. He had to leave France before he could mature this plan, but a young merchant of Havre took up his idea, and devoted his fortune to carrying it out. As a means to an end, he formed a company, which took the name of the French Oceanic Company, and which, as a beginning of the work in view, purchased and fitted out a suitable ship. The next thing to do was to find a suitable man to command her, and undertake the complicated service for which she was destined. The thoughts of all concerned

centred on Auguste Marceau, to whom the offer of the command of the expedition was accordingly made. He was at the time at Brest, fitting out a ship for foreign service, and though he keenly desired to labour for the salvation of souls, he could not at once make up his mind to accept the offer. Not only did he believe himself to be unfitted for the work proposed, but he depended on his profession for his very subsistence, and should the Oceanic Company fail, he would, in his own words, be reduced to begging for bread on the steps of the church. However, his desire to serve God won the day, and, having with difficulty obtained leave from the Government, he put himself at the disposal of the Company.

His professional friends were indignant with him for taking this step, for there reigned in the navy an unreasonable and unbounded contempt for anything connected with the merchant service. "Are you quite mad?" was said to him by a friend. "Yes," replied Marceau, "humanly speaking, I am; but I hope that my folly may prove to be true wisdom, for it is for faith and by faith that I am acting." His mother alone stood by him. She appreciated her son's sacrifice, and no word of blame or regret could her friends extract from her. "I had rather see my dear son's name the last on the list of martyrs than the first on the list of admirals," was her reply.

Marceau discovered soon enough that his new employers were somewhat exacting task-masters, and for a whole year after his resignation he was employed in a painful and humiliating process of begging. The national and somewhat mercantile spirit which pervaded the Oceanic Company displeased him, and he vainly tried to give to the work a more religious character. At last, however, in August 1845, he took command of the missionary ship, which had been solemnly blessed by the Bishop of Nantes, and re-christened the *Ark of the Covenant*. She carried a figure-head of Our Lady of Compassion, and at her mast head floated a flag with a cross on it. With twenty missionaries on board she finally sailed for the Pacific on November 15, 1845,

arriving at the first island in Monseigneur Douarre's vast vicariate ten months afterwards.

To the Congregation of Picpus, and to the Order of Marist fathers is due the glory of first Christianizing the beautiful islands of the Pacific, and of watering with their blood the fruitful seed they sowed. Marceau's life and work during the next four years are so mixed up with the history of the Marist missions, to aid and protect which the *Ark of the Covenant* was chartered, that it is necessary before proceeding further to glance briefly at the work accomplished by them.

Scarcely ten years before the *Ark of the Covenant* arrived in Oceania, six Marist fathers, under the direction of Monseigneur Pompallier, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, arrived from France among the islands. After a vain attempt to land in Tahiti, whence they were driven by the English Protestant missionaries, they separated, and spread the faith in different islands.

It is hard to imagine, and harder to describe, the hideous forms which heathenism took in these parts. The inhabitants of a large number of the islands were cannibals of the most horrible description, for they did not confine themselves to devouring prisoners of war, as a token of victory, nor, as a rule, was cannibalism part of their religious worship, but it was practised out of sheer hideous greed. "O, if you only knew how good human flesh is to eat!" was the only, and, as he considered it, the sufficient excuse pleaded by a young chief of Halgan, in reply to Marceau's reproaches for having treacherously planned an ambuscade, meant to entrap the whole ship's company of the *Ark of the Covenant*. Friend turned on friend, and brother on brother, to slay and eat him. Children were plucked from their mothers' arms and devoured before their eyes; and a chief is mentioned in the annals of the mission of Futuna who had killed with his own hand and devoured every member of his family, including his mother! Under this hideous system, the population of these islands was threatened with rapid extermination, and

it required all the beneficent influences of the Catholic Faith to raise up and preserve the race.

It was on the island of Wallis, inhabited by cannibals such as these, that Father Bataillon, accompanied by one lay-brother, both totally ignorant of the language, landed in 1837. Fortunately for him and for the poor islanders, a chief befriended him when he landed, and was thus, by the laws of the country, bound to protect his life. Though, however, no one was allowed to kill him by violence, the natives, who suspected and detested him as an intruder, did all they could to drive him away, and nobody was allowed to supply him with food. He lived on what wild fruits and roots he could gather unmolested, and at one time kept himself from starvation by sharing some food thrown to the pigs. He was, in his own words, resolved to live so as to save the people: and he did. Such was the mighty power of the faith that in four years the whole brutal and cannibal population was Christian, converted by the unassisted labours of this one holy missionary. When, six years afterwards, in 1843, Father Bataillon was named Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, Monseigneur Douarre, who was sent to consecrate him, found him still alone, and in such a state of destitution that he was half-naked, and without either hat or shoes.

At the time that the *Ark of the Covenant* first visited Wallis, scarcely ten years after Father Battaillon had landed on it all alone, there were three churches on the island, in which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved; and these natives, these former cannibals, had a wonderful devotion to our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, worshippers being found at His feet at every hour of the day and night. So fearful were they of even unintentional irreverence that, when the wind blew high, women, relieving each other, stood holding veils round the sanctuary lamps lest they should be blown out. Every Mass was attended by crowds, and after evening devotions in the churches, the families met at home to recite the rosary. Unlike the Protestant missionaries, who put down all native amusements with a high hand and pronounced both music and dancing to be sinful,

the missionary fathers encouraged every innocent recreation. The island teemed with the songs of the gay, light-hearted people, St. Peter and the Pope being the favourite and most inspiring themes of the native minstrels. So appreciative were the Wallisians of the blessings they enjoyed, that the young men came in numbers to Marceau's ship to ask to be employed in the conversion of other islands less favoured than their own. And yet so recent was their state of idolatry that each of these men bore on their persons the indelible stamp of it, having cut off the little finger of their right hand in honour of their gods.

The conversion of the island of Futuna by Blessed Peter Chanel, the first martyr of Oceania, is better known than that of Wallis. Accompanied by a lay-brother, and Thomas, an English interpreter, he was landed on the island of Futuna by Monseigneur Pompallier the day after Father Bataillon had been left there. Thomas was a Protestant, but he was not slow to open his heart to the truth, and was the martyr's first convert in the island. For two years the holy missionary lived unmolested, and even respected, studying the language and doing no work for souls except by baptising infants at the point of death. As soon, however, as he had sufficiently mastered the Futunian dialect, he began to preach the faith, and ere long a large number of natives put themselves under instruction. The king, Nihuliki, who was also high priest of the island, beheld this defection of his people with great anger, and did all he could, by starvation and petty persecutions, to drive Father Chanel from Futuna. He did not dare to resort to actual violence for fear of his subjects, who venerated the holy missionary. Having learnt, however, that his own son, Meitala, was among the catechumens, Nihuliki, in his rage, lost all sense of caution, and commanded that Father Chanel should be slain. The ruffians employed by him found the holy martyr in his little garden, and beat him to the earth with clubs. Then, seized with love of plunder, they left him, crushed and half dead, and rifled the mission house. It was only when they had satisfied their cupidity that they returned and put

an end to his long agony by cleaving his skull with an axe. "My death is nothing but gain to me," were his last dying words, and as the event proved, it was nothing but gain to his flock for which he shed his blood. The very step taken by Nihuliki to stamp out the faith was the means of its victory, for so fruitful was the blood of the martyr, that shortly after his death the whole island was converted, and when Father Servant was sent to take up Blessed Peter Chanel's work, the natives met him in crowds clamouring for baptism. Some of the most zealous converts were the very men who had shed the martyr's blood, though we do not hear that Nihuliki himself obtained the grace of conversion.

Thus one savage island after the other was won to the faith. The feebleness, poverty, and helplessness of the instruments chosen to preach it, and the marvellous readiness of the corrupt heathen to embrace it are wonderful. The supernatural aspect of the results of the Catholic missionaries' work is enhanced by its startling contrast to the futile labours of the heretical preachers, rich in the things of this world, but with whom, most evidently, God was not working. It is now almost as well known to Protestants as it is to Catholics how dismal was the failure of the unworthy Protestant missionaries sent to evangelize Oceania. England being ahead of all other countries in her discoveries and mercantile enterprise in the Pacific, the teachers of error, protected and subsidized by her, were unfortunately in the field before the teachers of truth, and in many places had the chance of poisoning the ground before the seed was sown. These missionaries betrayed the trust of those who had equipped and sent them out at great expense, and cared little or nothing for the souls of those whom they were paid to convert. Their only thought was to amass wealth and provide comforts for themselves and for their large families at the expense of the natives, and the only visible result of their contact with these last was that the islanders, without abandoning the vices of heathenism, adopted those of civilization. These hirelings, whose own the sheep were not, cared for the interests of their flock no more than

for their souls, and abandoned them in the hour of necessity if their own safety were in any way imperilled. It was thus that a chief of Savai, a nominal Protestant, reproached them for deserting him when invaded by an enemy. "A strange pigeon," he said, "came to our woods and charmed us with his song. Our chiefs built a beautiful cage for it, their sons fed it, and we cared for it and caressed it. But one day a noise frightened the stranger pigeon, and while the detested *popès* (Catholics) ran into the midst of the battle to pour the life-giving water on the wounds of the warriors, he—timid bird—escaped to a distance. In vain we cried out: 'Pigeon, come back!' The frightened pigeon would not come, but flew away with all its company."

It was this cowardice of the hirelings that procured for such savage tribes as the cannibals of Wallis, Futuna, Fiji, &c., the blessing of having the unadulterated word of God preached to them; whereas among such peaceful and gentle people as those of Tahiti, Tonga, &c., and wherever heresy had even passed by, tainting the air and poisoning the ground, the soil refused to bear fruit readily. It will be understood that the teachers of error hated the teachers of truth in the same way that beasts of the night hate the light of day; and they tried in every way to prejudice the minds of their flocks against them. They depicted the missionary fathers as cruel tyrannical men who would seize the land and enslave the people. They even went so far as to say they would carry off the women and devour the children, and they employed magic-lantern slides made with the most abominable pictures descriptive of the habits of the Catholic missionaries. No wonder that when any of the fathers arrived at a so-called Protestant island, the poor natives fled and hid themselves. On one occasion, when FF. Roudain and Violette landed on one of the Samoan islands, and had at last persuaded the poor frightened people to approach, they examined the new-comers most minutely, and walked round them to discover the tails and horns which they had been told they possessed. Of course, on every occasion preju-

dice and terror vanished under the influence of closer acquaintance. The struggle has been long, but in almost every instance, the faith has triumphed at last. "It is because the net of Peter is fit to catch fish," explained a young chief, who had tasted of both forms of Christianity. "The net of the heretics catches nothing, because Jesus Christ does not assist their fishing, and has not entered their ship!"

To return to Marceau. Having seen how isolated and abandoned the first missionary fathers were during their earlier labours, it is easy to appreciate the value of his services while he was in the Pacific. Each island in turn was visited by the *Ark of the Covenant*, which brought relief to those who were well-nigh worn out with toil, anxiety, sickness and solitude, and rescue to those who were in danger from the fierce and unconverted savages such as still existed in the New Hebrides. The very presence in these waters of the fine ship, with her strong and fervent crew, infused fresh life and energy into those exiles for Christ's sake, bringing them, as it did, once more into touch with the outer world, and their own superiors; and moreover it gave them greater importance in the eyes both of heathen and heretics. In a word, the work done by the ship and her crew proved the wisdom of Monseigneur Douarre's foresight, and has won for the labours of his instrument, Auguste Marceau, the title of apostolic.

There was a vigour and strength about this man's piety which endeared him to the missionaries, and acted on their dusky flocks as magnetically as it did on board his own ship, where, without either preaching or compulsion on his part, every man became a fervent and practising Catholic. He had a real love for the convert natives, regarding them simply as Christians, and having no national or colour prejudice. The terms of friendship and equality on which he met them, won their hearts and confidence, and called forth their finest qualities, just as the contempt with which the inferior races are usually treated by Europeans evokes a reciprocal contempt which they are afraid to show, and develops the deceit-

ful and baser side of their nature. There are few cases on record of mutual love more touching than that between Marceau and a young Wallisian convert named Salamone, who followed his white friend all over the Pacific, and finally back to France, their friendship being severed only by the death of Marceau. Salamone had gone into battle wearing a miraculous medal. A bullet which would have pierced his heart was stopped by the medal, the image of which was indelibly impressed on his flesh. This wonderful preservation of his life inspired the young Wallisian with a great devotion to Our Lady, which impelled him to attach himself to Marceau and the service of the missions.

Nobody could put himself under the influence of Marceau and not be devoted to Our Lady. Love for her and confidence in her protection were, it may be said, the ruling passion of his life. At the time of his conversion, when the world, the flesh and the devil were raging fiercely against him, he calmed his soul by making an absolute gift of himself to her, and confiding himself to her protection against his enemies. All through his Catholic life he styled himself "her slave," and his confidence in her care was unbounded. When first entrusted with the command of the *Ark of the Covenant* he, who had chosen the name borne by the vessel, gave complete charge of her and the work she was to do to Our Lady, nor, if we may use the expression did she belie the trust. In the eyes of the world the *Ark of the Covenant* bore a charmed life, which, while some attributed it to luck, and others to her captain's skill, Marceau attributed solely to Our Lady's care. As the ship sailed about over unknown seas, putting in at unknown islands, and steering through unknown channels with no chart to guide her, again and again she ran aground, and was as often safely got off again, sometimes against all human probability. Marceau was ever indefatigable in his duties, sparing himself in nothing and showing the way whenever the work was most severe; but while he worked he prayed, and his men put implicit trust both in his skill and in his prayers. In hours of imminent peril such as in a ter-

rible and memorable cyclone when the ship's rudder was carried away, so long as he was on deck the men feared nothing. When, afterwards, some one was expressing his wonder how the ship could have survived, one of the officers turning to Marceau said, with an air of polite flattery: "Ah, but we had a first-rate captain!" "The rosary did more than the captain," replied Marceau with a quiet smile.

One of his officers was, after the ship's return to France, appointed to a training-ship for boys at Nantes. Relating to them the events of that famous cyclone, he said: "Captain Marceau is the most perfect seaman I ever met. In that storm he was simply magnificent. Though he knew we had not much sea room, his calmness was such that when worn out with fatigue and knowing that for the sake of the ship's safety he must keep up his strength, he, after quietly telling me to call him at such and such a time, lay down and slept as soundly as if he had been on shore. When all was over we expressed our astonishment that he could have slept so peacefully. 'Did you forget,' he replied, 'that the Blessed Virgin was with us?'"

His day on board was such as to feed the supernatural life within him. There were always several missionaries on the ship, and therefore, except in bad weather, several Masses were said each day. These Marceau always served, regarding it as his prerogative. He received Holy Communion every day, which, for some reason, irritated some of the sailors. Having heard this, he addressed the crew on the subject. "Instead of being annoyed and scandalized," he said in conclusion, "you ought to be very glad, for if I did not receive Communion every day, very likely the first time one among you annoyed me I should throw him overboard!" "However," says the doctor who accompanied him and who was his intimate and devoted friend, "the lion was always there, under the lamb." This was true. He who had so completely mastered his violent temper as never, in spite of the habit of years, to utter an oath, could, or passing through a dangerous and intricate channel, when the man at the wheel put the helm the

wrong way, spring on the blunderer like a flash of lightning, and throw him right across the deck, while, taking the helm himself, he safely steered the ship.

Morning and evening he said prayers on board which all could attend who wished, and not one of the crew, whose duties did not keep him on deck, was absent. He also recited the rosary with the men, as well as with any natives who were there. Though he was a strict disciplinarian, and never lost his position, there existed a kind of paternal relationship between him and his men such as, perhaps, could have existed only on board a ship employed on that sort of semi-religious service. "We would one and all have died for him," is the testimony borne by one of his sailors.

Those years in Oceania were blessed to his own soul. The anxiety and gloom which had characterized the early days of his Christian life yielded to a great peace of soul, and a joyous and absolute dependence on God's will, which never left him. "It is God's will," was an habitual expression of his. "How can we wish things to be different." A Catholic friend who knew him intimately both before and after his Oceanic expedition writes thus about him: "During the first two or three years which followed Marceau's conversion an expression of struggle was painfully visible on his countenance; but when I saw him again later, his peace and deep calm astonished me, and I could scarcely have believed he was the same man."

He fully returned the affection borne to him by the Marist fathers, and intercourse with them was a source of great joy to him; and he began to have those yearnings for a religious life which it was not God's will should ever be satisfied. He loved to be with the missionaries, and as far as he could, share their life and religious observances. "O," he exclaimed while residing with the fathers at Annatom, where a mission had just been started, and everything was in a state of struggling poverty, "how happy I should be if I could serve as a simple lay-brother in your little kitchen!"

But the time came for Marceau to return to France. The ship had been nearly three years and a half on the

station, and more than four years absent from Europe; the crew had been kept away from home for a longer time than they had engaged for, and all hands were asking to return; the ship, moreover, was in need of repairs which could not be done in those savage parts. So it was that in January, 1849, the *Ark of the Covenant* set sail for France, amid universal lamentations, and loudly-expressed injunctions to return speedily. It was indeed Marceau's one idea to return to Oceania with all possible speed with a fresh ship and a fresh crew; but it was not God's will that he should ever again set eyes on the islands of the Pacific: he had done all that it was intended he should do for the missions there. After a voyage, shorter and more prosperous than her voyage out, the *Ark of the Covenant* anchored off Brest, and was paid off in July, 1849. It is interesting to know that the vessel which had been so specially dedicated to the service of God was not destined to serve for any lower purpose. She was bought by a mercantile firm, but foundered during the first trip.

It was not only the missionaries in the Pacific who valued the services of Marceau. The members of the Oceanic Company and all the Marist fathers in France were loud in their praises of the way in which he had carried out their wishes: there was even at one time question of a public ovation to welcome his return to France. This frightened his humility, and in a letter written to his mother during his voyage home he declares that he dreaded any marks of approbation with far more sincere terror than anything else that might befall him. Certain it is that if he prayed to be delivered from this danger, Almighty God heard his prayer, for from the time he landed in France until his death, about a year and a half afterwards, he was the object of the most unlooked-for abuse and disapprobation. His first action after his return set his employers against him. When the Oceanic Company was formed, he, as was said before, disapproved of the narrow, national and mercantile spirit which pervaded it. This sense of disapproval grew with his experience of its workings; and his strongly expressed desire to convert the Com-

pany into a society of a more disinterested and religious character, mortally offended his employers. As soon as he returned to France, he, with his usual promptness of action, called on the directors of the Company, laid before them his own views of reform, and announced his intention of retiring from their service unless his views were met. His suggestions were not taken, and the Company vented its sense of injury by freely criticizing the manner in which he had conducted its affairs; and, whether from ignorance or from malice, every kind of calumny was spread abroad as to his management, and even his honesty. While on one hand he was thus attacked from a business point of view, he was met from other quarters with censures which wounded him keenly. The religious world, comprising some really holy people whom Marceau venerated, and whose approbation he valued, blamed him severely for what they styled the eccentricity and exaggeration, and even the pride and hypocrisy of his views.

Having no desire to challenge the evil opinion formed of him, or disprove the accusations brought against him by the Company, he kept out of the world as much as he could. He lived for some time at Lyons, with the Marist fathers. He wished in this quiet retreat to calmly formulate his views about the Oceanic Company, and also to face, in the presence of God, the idea which was gathering strength in his mind, that it might be God's will that he should give up the world and join the Marist Order, and that if he returned to Oceania, it should be as a missionary. The memory left of his visit to their house, made a great impression on the fathers. The Superior General of the Order, whose headquarters were at Lyons, and who remained Marceau's loyal and devoted friend even when other fathers of the Order joined in the outcry against him, has left on record an account of the effect produced by him on the community. "On his face," he writes, "there was an expression of heavenly joy, and a look of peace and recollection, the very sight of which drew our hearts nearer to God." It was evident that Marceau's soul was ripening, and preparing itself for its last trials.

While he was residing with the Marist fathers, a suspicion as to the condition of his health forced itself on his friends. He was only forty-four years of age, but he was already an old man: indeed he had been known in Oceania by the name of "the old man"! The Superior General of the Marists formed an opinion that this premature old age might not be solely attributable to the wear and tear of interior conflict combined with hard work, and insisted on his consulting a well-known doctor. This physician discovered the existence of a disease, which in his opinion was fatal to the majority of those whom it attacked. When this verdict was broken to Marceau, his reply was characteristic: "I came to Lyons to try to learn God's will," he quietly said. "I have found what I wished, though not quite what I expected."

Ostensibly for his health he went to a distant village, in what part of France his biographers have left us in ignorance. There he spent months of solitude, dying by inches, though he himself knew it not any more than did his friends, who still pursued him with their well-meant advice and criticisms So little was anyone aware of the real state of his health that he was offered the governorship of Senegal, and his refusal of it added fuel to his friends' complaints of his eccentricity. This was not all. While the censures and harsh judgments of friends and foes deprived the last suffering months of his life of all exterior consolation, his soul was crushed by a terrible spiritual darkness and desolation. Still he never wavered in his absolute abandonment of himself to God's will. "O, how good God is," he would say, "to show me at last that there is only one thing to be desired on earth, even that God's will be done whatever happens!"

There is a little episode related of this period of his life which seems to show us how, at this time, disappointments met him everywhere, in small things as well as in greater, it not being, apparently, God's will that he should gather consolation from any human source. There was a certain religious of supernaturally holy life to whom people flocked for counsel; and to him,

Marceau, while still able to travel, went, hoping no doubt to gather comfort and strength from the holy man's words. But as soon as the simple religious learnt the name of his visitor, he talked to him about nothing but nautical matters, and especially about whale fishery! "Poor man," said Marceau, when relating the occurrence, and smiling at the memory of his disappointment, "he cared no more for whale fishery than I did!"

Though he was quite resigned to the thoughts of death, Marceau had such an overwhelming sense of being an unprofitable servant, that he could not think that his work was done, and that he was not to be given another chance of making up his deficiencies. Almost to the day of his death he felt confident that he should recover, and return to Oceania. His only trouble—if the word may be used of one so completely dependent on God's will—was as to the capacity in which he should return there, whether as a missionary priest, or, as before, in command of a ship. With a view to learning God's will, and making up his mind as to his religious vocation, he made a fifteen days' retreat at Notre Dame de Liesse, not a month before he died. There can be no doubt that this retreat hastened his death, but it brought him peace of mind, and a fixed belief that he was called to enter the Marist Order. He came to the conclusion deliberately, and fully realized the almost insurmountable difficulties which his age and previous education would place in the way of his studies for the priesthood. But his mind was made up, and he wrote to the Superior General to offer himself as his subject. His offer was conditionally accepted; but the letter which conveyed this tidings never reached his hands: his soul had passed away in his mother's house at Tours, before he could receive it. He died early in February, 1851.

It was, so to speak, accidentally that Marceau died in his mother's arms, while making her a passing visit on his way, as he confidently hoped, to the Marist noviciate. Had he foreseen the possibility of dying under these circumstances he would have avoided it, partly to save his mother pain, and partly to deprive her of the human joy of receiving his last breath. The intercourse

through life of this mother and son was very unique. She was the one and only person in the world for whom he felt real human attachment, but his love for her soul was so paramount that he took every opportunity of offering it the means of perfecting itself. He well knew her clinging, all-absorbing love for him, and on this account made himself to be an object of sacrifice to her, and rarely visited her, even when he could have easily done so. And she, whose one thought was love of him, responded nobly to his wishes, and rose triumphantly over nature. She herself relates how, but a short time before his death, he, to her great joy, sent for her to Paris, in order, as she fondly hoped, to nurse him and tend him. But as soon as she arrived he told her that he had arranged for her to make a retreat at a certain convent, whither she went at once, bravely and unflinchingly, and never betrayed by word or sign the keenness of her disappointment.

All this might kindle our indignation against her son, were it not for the strong love in his heart which underlay this stern spirit of sacrifice, and also for the evidence that his conduct was no common means of sanctification for her.

However, it was in her arms that he died, and it was she who received and treasured his last words. It might be said that the tenderness of God's love gave her that consolation which her son would have denied her, and in the memory of which she found all her joy for the rest of her life. "I know," she wrote pathetically after his death, "that there is a selfishness in my sorrow; but he was so necessary to my life and I did love him so much! You see how miserably weak I am, but anyone who knew my Auguste will pardon and excuse me. And please pray for me, that by submission I may be made worthy some day to join him where he is. Long, long ago I gave him to God, but in spite of that my love was too human, and God has imposed this sacrifice on me—and I hope that by His mercy I may make it generously."

After the death of her son, Madame Marceau entered the Third Order of Marists, Auguste having himself,

previous to his death, made all the arrangements for her admission.

Such were the life and death of Auguste Marceau. Unbeknown to himself, he led the van in a great religious reaction in the French Navy; and the fearless profession of faith, such as at the time of his conversion he alone dared to make was, before his memory had time to grow cold, considered as a matter of course by every Catholic officer. Men like Clerc, Joubert, de Plas and Bernaert, with whom their faith was the first object, came after him, and following in his steps infused a new and Catholic spirit into the Navy, which, it is to be hoped, endures to this day.

WHY I LEFT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.*

By James Britten,

Hon. Sec. Catholic Truth Society.

I wish to begin this lecture with an apology. No one can be better aware than I am that, except to one person—myself—the reasons which impel me to any course of action are of the very slightest importance—or rather, of no importance at all. This lecture is, like others of our course, the sequence of one delivered lately in this neighbourhood in connection with the Protestant Alliance: the title is an adaptation of that adopted on the former occasion; and the fact that, up and down the country, various people, including more or less escaped nuns and others, are telling audiences—sometimes large ones—why they "left the Church of Rome," seems to show that the experiences of what used to be called 'verts are still attractive.

The reasons which people allege for leaving one Communion and joining another are very various, and sometimes very curious. Mr. Fitzgerald, for example, said he became a Protestant because of the ignorance

* A Lecture delivered in March, 1893, in St. George's Schoolroom, Southwark, in connection with the St. George's Branch of the Catholic Truth Society, in answer to one given by a Mr. Fitzgerald, of the Protestant Alliance.

of the Catholic clergy and the worship of images. Well, as to ignorance, those who heard Mr. Fitzgerald will agree with me in thinking that he is hardly a competent judge; and as to the worship of images, supposing for one moment, what every Catholic will resent as an impossibility, that Catholics fell into so gross a sin, I would remark that the Jewish people more than once did the same, without thereby ceasing to be the people of God. Another Protestant lecturer was so shocked by the definition of Papal Infallibility in 1870, that she—at once left the Church? O dear no! remained in it for eighteen years, and then withdrew. A Nonconformist friend of mine told me the other day, that his sister had joined the Church of England. "You see," he said, "she is a wise woman. She told me she found that if her daughters were to mix in the best society, they must be Church people, so she and her husband joined the Establishment." Another friend, who had been a Baptist all his life, suddenly joined the Established Church. "The fact of it was," he said to me, "they were always quarrelling at the chapel, so one day I said I'd had enough of it, and I took the girls off to church—and now I've had them confirmed there, and we like it." I do not think these were good reasons for changing one's belief; my object however, is not to criticise other people's reasons, but to give you my own, and this I will proceed to do without further delay.

One thing only I will add—an assurance that I am most anxious to avoid anything which can in any way hurt the feelings of those who differ from me. I have no reason, indeed, for speaking harshly or disrespectfully of the Church of England. To one section of it I owe my training in many Catholic doctrines: while to another section I am indebted for having opened my eyes to the fact that those doctrines were not the doctrines of the Church of England. You will hear from me no attacks upon the character of the Anglican clergy, not only because I believe them to be an excellent body of men, but because, even if they were not so, their personal shortcomings would no more invalidate their teaching than

the character of Balaam prevented the truth of his prophetic utterances. It would, I think, be well if some Protestant lecturers would bear this in mind, just as they might remember that a Church which could claim the allegiance of a Newman, a Manning, and many more who were once Anglican clergymen, is hardly likely to be as corrupt or as ignorant as they would have their hearers suppose.

From my earliest days, I was brought up at St. Barnabas', Pimlico—one of the churches most intimately associated with the growth of High Church views in London. It was opened in 1850, and among those who preached on the occasion was the late Cardinal, then Archdeacon, Manning. In 1851 the Protestant feeling of a certain section of the community was roused. The riots which from time to time have disgraced the Protestant party,—which, nevertheless claims toleration as one of its virtues—and which culminated some years later in the scandalous scenes at St. George's in the East, broke out here. The timid Bishop of London closed the church and caused the resignation of Mr. Bennett, who received the living of Frome Selwood, Somerset, where he died some few years since, deeply regretted by his flock, whom he had familiarized with almost every Catholic doctrine and practice. It is worth noting, as showing the marvellous stride which Ritualism has made in the last forty years, that at St. Barnabas's the only then unusual ornaments were a plain cross and two candles on the so-called altar; an oak screen before the chancel, surmounted by a cross; a surpliced choir; and a service modelled on that of the English cathedrals.* No vestments save surplice, University hood, and black stole: no incense; no banners; no prayers save those in the Book of Common Prayer. The ornaments of the church which, forty years ago, had to be closed to protect it from the mob, would now hardly excite the notice of the Church Association.

My own memory dates, I suppose, from somewhere about 1856. The two great waves of conversion to the

* There was, indeed, a stone altar, which was subsequently removed, but this being covered was not conspicuously different from an ordinary table.

Catholic Church which followed the secession of Newman in 1845, and Manning in 1851, had passed: and in spite of occasional Protestant outbursts, the efforts of Protestant lecturers, and the adverse judgments of Privy Councils and other bodies, the High Church movement was steadily and everywhere gaining ground.

I will as briefly as possible tell you what I was taught to believe. First, I was taught that our Lord founded a Church, which He had built upon the foundation of His Apostles, He Himself being the chief corner-stone: that He had conferred on His Apostles certain powers by which they were enabled to carry on His work: that the Apostles had the power of forgiving sin, of consecrating the Eucharist, and of transmitting to their successors the supernatural power which they had themselves received: that the Apostles and those whom they consecrated were the rulers of the Christian Church: that this Church had power to define what was to be believed, and that it could not err, because of the promise of Christ that He would be with it, even to the end of the world: that the Church, moreover, was divinely guided in a very special manner by the Holy Ghost, and that its definitions to the end of time were inspired by the Holy Ghost, of Whom Christ had said "When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall lead you into all truth:" that the Church and not the Bible was God's appointed teacher; that the traditions of the Church were of equal authority with the Bible; and that the Church was its only authorized interpreter.

I was further taught that the grace of God was conveyed to the soul principally by means of the Sacraments, and that by Baptism the stain of original sin was removed. With regard to the Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion, I can best explain the teaching that I received by saying that when I became a Catholic, I was never conscious of any change of belief. The books which I used as an Anglican I could use equally well as a Catholic; they were compiled almost exclusively from Catholic sources, and before I had ever entered a Catholic church or read a Catholic book, I was familiar with the wonderful Eucharistic hymns of St. Thomas, and the other doctrinal hymns, modern as well as ancient, of the Catholic Church.

I do not think that in those days we were taught, as Anglicans are taught now, that there were seven Sacraments: but the practical result was the same. I shall never forget the care with which I was prepared for Confirmation; it never occurred to me to doubt that the clergy had the power of forgiving sins; indeed, I think I exaggerated this power, for I thought that the declaration of absolution at matins and evensong was sacramental. Confession was not urged as it is now, and confessionals were not, as they are now, openly placed in the churches; but in sermons and in private instruction the "benefit of absolution," as the Prayer-book calls it, was referred to, and we knew that confessions were heard in the sacristy. I have already said that we believed in the apostolical succession—in other words, in the sacrament of orders; and it was difficult to ignore the plain command of St. James as to Extreme Unction—indeed, I have never been able to understand, save on the basis of Luther's well-known saying that the Epistle of James was a "matter of straw," how Protestants evade compliance with this text.

As to externals, although in those days these had developed but little, the principle of them was laid down. We were told—and I do not see how any one can deny it—that there were two rituals authorized by Almighty God—the ancient Jewish rite, and the mystical vision of the Apocalypse. In both were found the symbolic use of vestments and incense, music and ceremonial: nowhere did we find any indication that these externals were to be done away, and we knew that the Christian Church adopted them from as early a period as was possible. The English Church, indeed, was shorn of her splendour, but the time would come when she would arise and put on her beautiful garments; and if there should be any High Churchman among my hearers, he will say, and say truly, that that time *has* come, and that, so far as externals go, the Established Church can now vie successfully with the Roman ritual in splendour and dignity.

And as with other externals, so with music. Among the many things for which I am grateful to those who brought me up, few are more present to me than the

love which they gave me for the old plain chant of the Church—the chant which we called Gregorian, thereby giving honour to the great Pope who sent St. Augustine to bring this nation back to God. And with the old chants we had the old words—not only the Psalms of David, but the words of the Fathers of the Church in her hymns—of St. Ambrose, and St. Gregory, and St. Bede, and St. Thomas Aquinas: for in those early days not a hymn was sung in that church which had not upon it the hall-mark of antiquity.

To the same hand which translated most of these hymns into sonorous and manly English, I owed my knowledge of the lives of the Saints, as pourtrayed in the volumes setting forth the 'Triumphs of the Cross' and the 'Followers of the Lord.' To Dr. Neale—that great liturgical scholar—I shall always feel a debt of gratitude for having made me understand, however imperfectly, what is meant by the Communion of Saints, and for having brought to my knowledge that wonderful storehouse of saintly history which is among the many treasures of the Catholic Church. It is true that we did not then, as Anglicans do now, invoke them, or address our litanies to the Mother of God; yet the veneration of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints was inculcated upon us in many ways.

So with the observance, not only of festivals, but of fasts—the duty of keeping both was impressed on us. The brightness of the sanctuary, with its many lights and flowers, and the stately procession, chanting psalms, was associated with all the great Christian festivals, making "the beauty of holiness," something more than a name; while the times of self-denial and the penitential season of Lent were brought home to us by the silent organ and the violet-hung sanctuary. The duty of supporting our pastors, the equality of all men before God,

> "Who has but one same death for a hind,
> And one same death for a king"

were also taught us, as fully as the Church herself teaches them.

You may wonder what were the impressions I received

with regard to the Catholic Church on one side, and Nonconformists on the other. With regard to the Church, I was taught that there were three branches—the Anglican, the Greek, and the Roman—and that of these three the Catholic Church was made up: that in this country the Church of England represented the Catholic Church, and that the Roman branch had no business here—yet, I am thankful to say, that I cannot remember ever having heard at St. Barnabas', a single sermon against Roman Catholics, or an uncharitable word regarding them. I therefore had none of those prejudices which seem inseparable from certain forms of Protestantism—prejudices which prevent even a fair hearing of the Catholic position. I remember one sermon on the honour due to the Blessed Virgin, in which the Roman devotion to her was spoken of as excessive; and another on St. Peter, in which his primacy, as distinct from his supremacy, was acknowledged: but until I was seventeen I never heard the Protestant side of the Church of England advanced from the pulpit, although then, as now, the itinerant Protestant lecturer presented to those who were credulous enough to accept his statements a caricature of the Catholic Church. In those days a Mr. Edward Harper, who had some prominent position in the Orange Society, occupied the place which is now held by Mr. Collette, and, was filled, until lately, by Mr. Mark Knowles.

I ought to add that I had never attended a Roman Catholic service, and had only once entered a Catholic church. This was the old Oratory, into which I went one winter afternoon on my way to the South Kensington Museum. One of the few things I knew about what I considered the Roman branch of the Church was that the Blessed Sacrament was reserved on its altars, and I remember kneeling in the dark, flat-roofed Oratory, with its lamp burning before the altar, in adoration of the Presence which I felt to be there. I was quite sure—for I had never heard it called in question—that the views I have given were those of the Church of England: that the Reformation, disastrous as it was, in many ways, had not broken the apostolical succession: and that the

Western and Eastern Churches, equally with the Anglican, had Orders and Sacraments, and were of the unity of the Faith.

With Nonconformists it was different. They had no authorized ministry, and therefore no sacraments. They had thrown off the authority of the Church, and substituted their own interpretation of the Bible. They were the followers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; against them was directed the warning, "mark those who cause divisions among you, and avoid them." I am afraid that we looked upon them as socially inferior to ourselves—certainly as people to be avoided—and as "Protestants," a term which even then Anglicans held in contempt. With Catholics we had much in common—indeed, we *were* Catholics ourselves: but dissent, with its numberless divisions, absence of dignity, unauthorized teachers, and ugly conventicles—this was far from us, and with it we could hold no communion.

This was my position until, at about the age of eighteen, I went into the country to study medicine. I shall never forget my first Sunday there. There was a magnificent old parish church, with deep chancel and broad aisles, choked up with pews of the most obstructive design. A small table with a shabby red cloth stood away under the east window; a preached service, and a choir of a handful of men and boys, unsurpliced and untidy, sang the slender allowance of music; a parish clerk responded for the congregation;—these were the objects that met my eyes and ears that first Sunday of my exile. But that was not all. We had a sermon, delivered by a preacher in a black gown—to me a new and hideous vestment—on behalf of the Sunday schools. That sermon I shall always remember. In the course of it, the preacher enumerated the things they did *not* teach the children in the schools: they did *not* teach them they were born again in baptism, they did *not* teach that the clergy were descended from the Apostles, they did *not* teach that they had power to forgive sins, they did *not* teach a real presence in the Communion—"Real *presence!*" I heard a parson say in that church; "*I* believe in a real *absence!*"—they did *not* teach the doctrine of good works. I began to wonder what was

left to be taught, until the preacher explained that predestination and salvation by faith alone were inculcated upon the children. On the next Sunday the Holy Communion was administered—*how*, I can hardly describe, except by saying that it was manifest that no belief in its supernatural aspect was maintained. I can see now the parish clerk, at the end of the service, walking up the chancel, and the minister coming towards him with the paten in one hand and the chalice in the other, waiting while he, standing, ate and drank the contents of each.

My first feeling was that these clergy had no right or place in the Church of England. There was a moderately "high" church five miles off, and whenever I could, I found my way there. But it became unpleasantly plain that the Church of England, which I had regarded as an infallible guide, spoke with two voices:—I began to realize that even on vital matters two diametrically opposed opinions, not only *could be*, but *were*, held and preached. I knew my Book of Common Prayer, and its rubrics, as well as I knew my Bible: but to one part of it my attention had never been called, as it now was Sunday by Sunday. I had known without realizing all that it implied, that the Queen was, in some way, the Head of the Church—or rather, of two Churches, one in England and one in Scotland: but I now found that she declared herself to be "Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and, by God's ordinance, Defender of the Faith:" that General Councils, which I had been taught to believe infallible, could not be held "without the commandment and will of princes," and not only might err, but had erred, in things pertaining to God; that Confirmation, Penance, and the like, were not Sacraments of the Gospel; that the benefits of Baptism were confined to "they that receive it rightly;" that the reception of the body of Christ in the Holy Communion is dependent on the faith of the recipient; and that "the sacrifices of Masses . . . were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits." This last was indeed a trial to me. It is true that twenty-five years ago the word "Mass" was not in common use among Anglicans as it is now, and

I do not think an Anglican clergyman would have been found to say in public, as one said the other day, that "he would not stay a minute in a Church where the Mass was not, for if they had not got the Mass, they had no worship whatever." But we knew that the term was retained in the first reformed Prayer-book, and that it was the name employed throughout the Western Church for the Eucharistic service.

Here then was my difficulty: and the more I faced it, the more I found that the ground which I had thought so sure was slipping away from under me. Not, thank God, that I ever doubted any of the truths which had been implanted in me: but I began to see, more and more clearly, that the authority on which I had thought them to rest was altogether lacking. I found that what I had received as the teaching of a Church was only the teaching of a certain section of its clergy; and that other clergy, with exactly as much authority, taught exactly opposite opinions: they were not priests, they said: they claimed to offer no sacrifice; no office of forgiving sin was theirs: they possessed no supernatural powers.

This was bad enough, but there was worse behind. The other branches of the Church—what did they say on these momentous points? Alas! there was no room for doubt here. Neither the Eastern nor Western "branches," each of them far larger than the Anglican, would admit for a moment the claims of the Anglican clergy to be priests: and a large section of themselves equally denied it. The Bishops in some cases expressly told the candidates for ordination that they were not made priests; and if there were no priests, how could the sacraments, depending on them, be celebrated? It was no special ill-will to Anglicans that Rome showed by refusing to recognize their orders; for she never denied those of the Greeks, although these were equally separated from her unity. The Branch Theory broke down—it would not work.

Then I read other books—many of them by Newman, for whom Anglicans in those days cherished a warm affection and respect, in spite of his secession. And more and more the conviction was forced upon me

that the beliefs in which I had been brought up I had received on the authority of certain individual members of a body which not only tolerated, but taught with equal authority, the exact opposite of these beliefs—that the Anglican communion, even as represented by those who claimed for it Catholicity, was a mere Protestant sect—differing only from more recent denominations in that it retained certain shreds and patches of the old faith. It was, in short, a compromise—a *via media* between Rome and Dissent—and it was as unsatisfactory as compromises usually are.

Meanwhile, there came upon me more and more plainly the claims of a Church which taught with authority and uniformity all that I believed; which claimed to be the one body having a right to teach; and which, without equivocation or hesitation, pointed out to its members one only means of salvation. By one of those occurrences which we call accidents I became acquainted with a Catholic priest—one of the first of those Anglicans who gave up friends and position and everything that could make life happy at the call of their Master. From him I learnt what was hitherto lacking to my knowledge of the Church; I realized, as I had never done before, that the first mark of God's Church was Unity—a mark which no one can pretend to find in the Church of England: and, after a period of anxiety such as none can know who have not experienced it, I was received into that Unity.

Of my experience since, you will not expect me to speak. If I must say anything, I will venture to employ the words of Cardinal Newman, which express better than any words of mine could, my feelings now:—"From the day I became a Catholic to this day, I have never had a moment's misgiving that the Communion of Rome is the Church which the Apostles set up at Pentecost, which alone has 'the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the revealed law, and the service of God, and the promises,' and in which the Anglican Communion, whatever its merits and demerits, whatever the great excellence of individuals in it, has, as such, no part. Nor have I ever for a moment hesitated in my conviction that it was my duty to join the

Catholic Church, which in my own conscience I felt to be Divine."

When I told my friends with whom I was living that I had become a Catholic, the result somewhat astonished me: and those good Protestants who assume—as many do—that persecution and Popery are inseparably connected, while Protestantism and liberty of conscience are convertible terms, may like to know what happened. My desk was broken open; my private letters were stolen; letters sent me through the post were intercepted, opened, and sometimes detained; I was prevented from going to a Catholic church or to see a Catholic priest; and a picture of the Crucifixion, which I had had in my room for years, was profaned in a way which I do not care to characterize. These things are small and trifling, compared with what many have suffered, but what light do not even they throw upon that right of private judgment which Protestants profess to hold so dear?

One thing seemed to me at my conversion remarkable, and still remains to me one of the most wonderful features of Protestantism—the universal assumption that Catholics do not know what they themselves believe, and that Protestants understand it far better. The average Protestant, for instance, thinks and often asserts that we believe that the Pope cannot sin, that we worship images, that we are disloyal to the Queen, that we put Our Lady in the place of God, that we sell absolution for money and have a recognized tariff for the remission of sins, that we may not read the Bible, that we would burn every Protestant if we could, that we lie habitually, that our convents are haunts of vice, that our priests are knaves or conscious impostors, and that our laity are dupes or fools. I could, if time would allow, easily bring extracts from Protestant writers in support of each of these positions. Not only so, but by isolated texts of scripture; by scraps of the Fathers, torn from their context, and often mistranslated; by misrepresentations of history;* by fragments of

* See *Mr. Collette as a Historian*, by the Rev. S. F. Smith, S.J.—Catholic Truth Society, 1d.

prayers and hymns, interpreted as no Catholic would interpret them; by erroneous explanations of what they see in our churches; by baseless inferences arising from ignorance of the very language we use—they formulate and are not ashamed to propagate charges against us which in many cases we cannot condemn seriously, because it is impossible to help laughing at them. Our contradictions are not listened to; our corrections are unheeded; our statements are disbelieved. Give us, we say, at least fair-play; hear what we have to say for ourselves; do not condemn us unheard; do not assume that we are all fools or rogues. But we are not listened to: we are not allowed to know what we ourselves believe! "O for the rarity of Christian charity," or at any rate of Protestant charity. We are sometimes accused of omitting one of the commandments: but it is the bigoted Protestant who does this—he entirely forgets that there is in the Decalogue one which says sternly—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." How many Protestants who speak against the Church have ever expended a penny on a Catechism which contains a full clear statement of Christian Doctrine—which is approved by authority, and on which the religious education of our children is based? Yet they would learn more from it of what we really believe than from a copy of every tract in Mr. Kensit's shop, and of all the books which Mr. Collette ever wrote.

It often puzzles me how it is that Protestants do not realize the utter futility of the attempts they have been making for the last fifty years to arrest the tide of Catholic tendency which is flooding the nation. Go into St. Paul's—say on the festival of the Gregorian Association—see the long procession of surpliced choirs with their banners, many of them bearing Catholic devices, listen to the old antiphons, unauthorized indeed by the Book of Common Prayer, set to the chants to which they are sung in the Church throughout the world wherever the Divine Office is chanted; see the preacher mount the pulpit, prefacing his sermon with the invocation of the Blessed Trinity and the sign of the Cross; hear him refer, as one referred two years since, to "Our Lady"—a

title only less dear to Catholics than that of Our Lord: and as you sit and listen, look to the end of the church, with its dignified and decorated altar, and the gorgeous reredos, not unworthy of a Catholic church, with the great Crucifix in its centre, and over all the statue of Mary with her Divine Child in her arms: and as you leave the church, do not forget to notice the side chapel and its handsome altar, with cross, and flowers, and lights, where the daily communion service is held. Then remember that less than forty years since, not one of these ornaments or signs could be seen in the desolate dirty edifice, with its shabby communion-table well-nigh out of sight under the east window. Go to Westminster, and see, prominent at the restored north door, another statue of Mary with her Child. Go up and down the country, both to your large towns and to your remote villages, and you will find the same advance—only more developed. Last year, I strolled into the magnificent old abbey church of a little Oxfordshire village: the air was dim and heavy with incense; there were three altars, each duly furnished with lights, cross, and sacring-bell; on the notice board was a copy of the parish magazine, in which I read an exhortation on the duty of hearing Mass on Sunday which might have been taken—and it may be was taken—from a Catholic manual of instruction: and a list of the services to be held on the Feast of Corpus Christi! The Crucifix is now common in Protestant churches; pictures of Our Lady are not rare; statues of her are to be found—why do not our Protestant friends look to this, instead of raising their voices against Catholicism? They shriek and rant after their manner; yet one stronghold after another is captured, and they stand by and are powerless to hinder it.

Look at the wealth of literature of every kind, which pours forth from the ritualistic press: the manuals and treatises, the dogmatic works, the numberless little books, each more advanced than the last, with which the country is literally flooded, and of which the St. Agatha's Sunday Scholars' Book, which lately received a notice from the Protestant Alliance, is but one out of a thousand. Look even at the levelling up which has marked the publications of so eminently respectable a body as the Society

for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. How is it that, with all your power and influence and money, you cannot arrest this advance in the direction of Rome?

And what about Rome itself? There are those who think that England is rapidly becoming Catholic. I am not of that number: but I cannot fail to see that the fields are white unto harvest: and I see too that the labourers are being sent forth into the harvest.

More than fifty years ago, Macaulay pointed out in that wonderful essay on Ranke's History of the Popes, which I would commend to all Protestants who do not know it, as a "most remarkable fact, that no Christian nation, which did not adopt the principles of the Reformation before the end of the 16th century, should ever have adopted them. Catholic communities have since that time become infidel and become Catholic again; but none has become Protestant." How is it at home? Protestants have poured money into Ireland; they did not scruple to avail themselves, to their everlasting disgrace, of the sufferings of the great famine in order to buy over with their funds the souls and bodies of the destitute Irish. "God has opened a great door to us in Ireland"—such was the blasphemous announcement which prefaced one of the appeals for those liberal funds without which no Protestant missionary enterprise, at home or abroad, can be carried on. What is the result? Is Ireland less Catholic than she was? Come closer—come to England—here are facts which Protestants will not dispute, for they come to you with the authority of the Protestant Alliance, from one of whose publications I quote them. Since 1851, the number of priests in England has more than trebled itself; of churches, chapels, and stations, we have now 1387, where in 1851 we had 586; of religious houses of men we have 220, against 17, forty years ago; of convents—those favourite objects of attack to a certain class of Protestants—those places whose inmates, to judge from the rubbish one hears and reads, have only one aim—to escape—we have just 9 times as many as we had in 1851: the numbers are 450 and 53. Come nearer home: in 1851 the diocese of Southwark included what is now the diocese of Portsmouth: there were then in it 67 priests; there are now, in the two

dioceses, 428—an increase of 363; there were 57 churches and stations, where there are now exactly 200; there are 80 convents instead of 9; there are 38 monasteries instead of 1! Come to these very doors; when I came to live in Southwark, eight years ago, there was for this vast district one church—the Cathedral, with four priests; now the staff at the Cathedral is more than doubled, and Walworth, the Borough, and Vauxhall are separated into distinct missions, each with two priests. Add to this such churches as St. Alphege and St. Agnes, where the doctrines taught, and the ornaments used, are almost identical with our own; All Saints (Lambeth), St. John the Divine, Christ Church (Clapham), and many more, where sacramental teaching of an advanced type is given; and then calculate for yourselves what effect in this neighbourhood the puny and impotent attacks of the Protestant Alliance is likely to produce: a Society whose patron should surely be the good old lady who thought to sweep back the sea with a mop; whose members spend their money on red rags, and waste their time by shaking them in the face of a bull—I mean John Bull—who doesn't care twopence about them. My Protestant friends, there was one of old who gave sound advice to those who took counsel to slay Peter and they that were with him: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God." Remember that "in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword,"—in spite of the penal laws, which the Lord Chief Justice has lately styled "a code as hateful as anything ever seen since the foundation of the world"—the Faith is among you still; the gates of hell have not prevailed against it.

And—speaking quite soberly and dispassionately—I do not hesitate to say that some of the weapons which are employed against the Church seem to me to come from within those gates. I respect the conscientious, God-fearing Protestants who, under the influence of strong delusion, feel it their duty to oppose the Church. I remember the case of Saul, afterwards called Paul, and how he persecuted the Church of God; and I do not

despair of their conversion. I have only sympathy for those who are misled by prejudiced and bigoted teachers. Every convert can say, with the man in the Gospel, "whereas I was blind, now I see;" and I am not sure that those who have had the happiness of being born Catholics always make sufficient allowance for the imperfect vision of those without the fold. But what shall be said in defence of those who are not ashamed to write and to publish calumnies, as foul as they are false, against priests and nuns, and the Sacraments of the Church—those "lewd fellows of the baser sort," who, under the guise of religion, do not scruple to pander to the lowest and worst of passions by the circulation of filthy fictions of which 'Maria Monk' is by no means the worst—of works which, so far as I know, are to be found in only two places in London—in the shop of a Protestant publisher, and in a street which has for years obtained an evil notoriety for the sale of indecent literature. I am not going to name these books: but if any one is anxious, for any good purpose, to know to what I refer, I am ready to tell him. Some years since, one of the worst of these was seized and condemned as an indecent publication. Since then, the Protestant purveyors* of pornographic publications have been more careful to keep within the letter of the law, although it is not long since the editor of *Truth*—by no means a scrupulous purist—denounced some of their wares as outraging decency. These, and the highly spiced lectures "to men," or "to women *only*"—appeal to but one class of persons; and I call upon all decent men and women, be they Jew, Turk, heretic, or infidel—and above all, upon Mr. Collette, who was at one time intimately connected with a body called the Society for the Suppression of Vice—to dissociate themselves from any part in the wholesale propagation of indecency which is carried on in the name of religion. The cause must indeed be a bad and a hopeless one which can stoop to avail itself of weapons such as these.

But I will not refer further to a hateful kind of warfare with which very few will sympathise. I will

* See *Truth*, Dec. 28, 1893, for further remarks on one of these persons.

rather briefly apply to two among the many schools of thought in the Establishment the remarks which I have made.

To the Protestants or Low Churchmen I would say: Can you conscientiously remain in a Church, the members of which claim to hold all Roman doctrine, save that of submission to the Pope—which permits the teaching not only of Baptismal Regeneration and the Real Presence, but of Confession, the Monastic or Religious Life, the use of Images, Fasting, Prayers and Masess for the Dead, the Invocation of Saints, Prayers to the Blessed Virgin, the power of dispensing from religious obligations—and which not only allows these things to be taught, but permits them to be emphasized by every external adjunct? To the High Churchman my question is exactly the converse of this. You believe all or most of the points which I have just enumerated: can you remain in communion with those who deny them? Read, if you have not read it, a pamphlet on the Reformation by one of your own Bishops—Dr. Ryle—one of those whom you regard as successors of the Apostles, with the power of ordaining priests. He tells you how the reformers "stripped the office of the clergy of any sacerdotal character"—how they removed the words 'sacrifice' and 'altar' from the Prayer-book, and retained the word priest only in the sense of presbyter or elder—how they denied the power of the keys—how they cast out the sacrifice of the Mass as a blasphemous fable, took down the altars, prohibited images and crucifixes, and "declared that the sovereign had supreme authority and chief power in this realm in all causes ecclesiastical." What is gained by the wearing of cope and mitre and the teaching of sacramental doctrine by one bishop, if another can at the same time, with equal authority, denounce all these things? and how can a Church, with any claim to be considered as teaching with authority, tolerate with equanimity both of these extremes?

We Catholics are so accustomed to the unity of the Church that we do not perhaps always think what a wonderful thing it is: and Protestants, I find, often do not realize it. They sometimes point to our religious

orders as if they were equivalent to their own manifold divisions! It is, I believe, the literal truth that as the sun shines day by day on each part of the world, he sees at each moment the Blessed Sacrifice of the Altar uplifted to the Eternal Father. Where, save in the Catholic Church, shall we find such a fulfilment of the prophecy—"from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same shall incense be offered to my name and a pure offering?" Not only so, but throughout the world—from "Greenland's icy mountains" to "India's coral strand"—wherever two or three are gathered together in the One Name is the same belief, the same sacrifice, mainly the same ritual: so that the Irish exile leaving the Old World for the New, where Catholicism is increasing with rapid strides, is as much at home in the churches of New York as he was in his roadside country chapel in the old country. Can any Catholic for a moment conceive the possibility of finding any one doctrine preached at St. George's contradicted by the priest at Walworth, controverted in the sermons in the Catholic chapel at Vauxhall, and called in question by Canon Murnane in the Borough? Can he imagine Cardinal Vaughan's teaching on the Mass contradicted by our own beloved Bishop? But will any Protestant tell me that—to take the two Anglican churches nearest to us—the teaching at St. Paul's is identical with that at St. Alphege? Could Mr. Allwork's congregation next Sunday avail themselves of Mr. Goulden's ministrations, or join in the hymns and prayers addressed to the Blessed Sacrament and the Mother of God?

The Catholic can go all over the world, and wherever he goes he will find the same Faith and the same Sacrifice. The Protestant cannot go at random into two churches in the same neighbourhood with any certainty that the teaching or ceremonial will be similar, and that with regard to the most vital points of faith. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" Remember that, as the cowl does not make the monk, so the most elaborate ritual and the most advanced teaching cannot make a Catholic. A few weeks ago I strolled into a handsome church in this neighbourhood, just as a lady dressed like a nun was taking the school-children to service. There was the raised altar, with its flowers

and lights and crucifix and what looked very like a tabernacle, and before the altar burned seven lamps. "Is this a Catholic church?" I said to the verger. "No, sir, Church of England," was the reply. My friends, disguise it as you will, the truth will out: your Catholic church is only the Church of England after all.

One point more. When I was thinking of becoming a Catholic, I pointed out to a friend these differences existing in the Church of England. Both, I said, cannot be true: neither the Church herself, nor the State which supports her, is able to say with authority which is right. My friend told me—what I believe people still say—that High and Low Church were united in essentials. Surely the most ignorant and superstitious Papists ever invented by a Protestant lecturer would recoil before such an absurdity as this statement involves. Surely it is "essential" to know whether Baptism is a mere symbol or a regenerating Sacrament; it cannot be a matter of indifference whether the sons of men have or have not power on earth to forgive sins; it cannot be a matter of opinion whether the Sacrifice of the Mass is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit, or the renewal of the great Sacrifice offered on Calvary? . There must be an authority to pronounce upon these points, and the Church of England neither has nor claims to be such authority. From the time of the Gorham Judgment, which left Baptism an open question, down to the Archbishop of Canterbury's decision the other day, uncertainty, vagueness, and indecision have marked every attempt to formulate any definite opinion. This last attempt has indeed justified ritualism on the ground that it means nothing in particular, and above all, nothing Roman. No wonder the *Times* spoke of a "sense of unreality," in "the effort to treat, as neutral or colourless, acts which we all know to be, in the view of a party in the Church, technical symbols and unequivocal doctrinal signs." It is true that, with marvellous effrontery, a popular Anglican hymn asserts—

> "We are not divided,
> All one body we;
> One in hope and doctrine,
> One in charity."

But does any Anglican believe it to be true? "Not divided!" Is there any one who will assert that the "doctrine" preached in the first half-dozen Anglican churches he comes across will be "one?"—or that the teaching of what is termed, with unconscious irony, the "religious press," has any claims to be considered identical? If the "doctrine" is one, why do we find in the same Church two such organizations as the English Church Union and the Church Association, each diametrically opposed to the other, and the latter continually prosecuting the clergy who represent the views of the former? Is there anywhere such a spectacle of division as this—a division which, as soon as the bonds of State Establishment shall have been broken asunder, cannot fail to be even more manifest than it is at present.

"Not divided!" It must be nearly thirty years ago, I think, that St. Paul's, Lorrimore Square, was in the forefront of Anglicanism. There was a change of vicar, and the congregation so little realized that they were "one in doctrine" with their new clergyman, that a great part of them seceded, and formed the nucleus of what is now the large body of worshippers attending St. Agnes', Kennington. But why, if they were "not divided," if they were "one in doctrine," did they not stay where they were?

"Not divided!" Is not division the very essence of Protestantism? and are not the divisions in the Establishment sufficient proof that it is Protestant? "We have within the Church of England," said the *Times* on one occasion, "persons differing not only in their particular tenets, but in the rule and ground of their belief."

Put it another way. Take the case of a Nonconformist who desires to become a member of the Church of England: suppose him to be some one in this neighbourhood: is he to be taken to St. Paul's or to St. Alphege's? Who is to decide? Surely it is not a matter of indifference. Mr. Ruskin has said that "The Protestant who most imagines himself independent in his thought, and private in his study of Scripture, is nevertheless usually at the mercy of the nearest preacher who has a pleasant voice and ingenious fancy."* And

* Our Fathers Have Told Us, iii. 125.

surely the faith which is put forward as that of the Church of England, depends entirely on the belief of the individual parson referred to. How different is the case with the Catholic Church!

I have said that the Church of England neither has nor claims authorty; and my last words shall be devoted to making this plain. If she has authority, as our High Church friends assert, whence does she derive it? Not from the old Church of England, for by the Reformation of Elizabeth, the old Catholic episcopate was swept away. Of the sixteen surviving Catholic Bishops, all save one—Kitchen of Llandaff, who took no part in the Reformation, nor in the consecration of Parker—were imprisoned, and Parker and those consecrated by him were intruded into the sees of the imprisoned Bishops. But granting that Parker and the rest were validly consecrated, whence did they get jurisdiction? Certainly not from the old Catholic Bishops; most certainly not from the source whence these obtained it, namely, the Pope; not by the fact of consecration, for orders and jurisdiction are distinct, and received independently of each other; not from either of Parker's consecrators—Barlow, Scory, Coverdale, and Hodgkins—for not one of these was in possession of a see, and they could not give what they themselves did not possess. The only answer possible, however unpalatable it may be to High Churchmen, is, that they got jurisdiction from the Crown, or not at all.

Every Protestant bishop now takes the oath of supremacy, by which he professes that the Sovereign is the "only supreme governor" of the realm "in spiritual and ecclesiastical things, as well as in temporal." Whence the Sovereign obtained this supremacy, or what "warranty of Scripture" can be adduced for it, I do not know; nor do I think it is easy to ascertain.

Moreover, the Establishment not only does not possess authority, but she expressly disclaims it. The First General Council of the Church prefaced its teaching with—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us:" and the Catholic Church, right down to the present day, has spoken with like authority. But what does the Church of England say? Her anxiety not to

be regarded as having any authority is almost pathetic: All Churches have erred, she says, in matters of faith and (by implication) I may fail also. The Church has power, indeed, to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith, but it cannot decree anything unless it is taken out of Holy Scripture. General Councils are not only dependent on the will of princes, but, when assembled, may err and have erred: nor may the Church declare anything of faith which is not read in Holy Scripture. To go a step further, who gave Holy Scripture its authority? It claims none for itself as a whole; it nowhere tell us of what books it is composed; Christians are nowhere told to read it; no text bids us keep Sunday holy, or authorizes infant baptism, or the taking of oaths. Who vouches for the authority of the Bible, I repeat? who, but that Church which from the earliest times has been its guardian and its only rightful interpreter.

It is true that to claim authority is one thing, and to possess it another. If saying we had a thing were equivalent to having it, we should find now-a-days authorized teachers in abundance. But it is difficult to believe that a body deriving its teaching power from God would take so much trouble to deny the possession of it. The Catholic Church does not act thus.

And when the spiritual head of the Establishment is consulted, he shows himself her true son. Some years ago, Mr. Maskell, who afterwards became a Catholic, asked the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Sumner, whether he might or might not teach certain doctrines of faith? "To which," the Archbishop said, "I reply: Are they contained in the word of God? Whether they are so contained, and can be proved thereby, you have the same means of discovering as myself, and I have no special authority to declare."

Here is the judgment passed upon the Church of England by the learned Dr. Döllinger, a man who has some claim to respect from Protestants, seeing that he had the misfortune to die outside the unity of the Catholic Church. "There is no church that is so completely and thoroughly as the Anglican, the product and expression of the wants and wishes, the modes of thought

and cast of character, not of a certain nationality, but of a fragment of a nation, namely, the rich, fashionable, and cultivated classes. It is the religion of deportment, of gentility, of clerical reserve. Religion and the Church are then required to be above all things, not troublesome, not intrusive, not presuming, not importunate." "It is a good church to live in," some one once said, "but a bad one to die in."

The absence of authority and of definite teaching—these were the reasons which induced me to leave the Church of England. The step once taken, all was clear; and on every side I found abundant evidence that, if there be a Church of God upon earth, the Holy Catholic and Roman Church alone can claim that title. That evidence I cannot bring before you now—I have already detained you too long. My Catholic hearers do not need it, and my Protestant friends will do well to seek it from those better qualified than myself, qualified to speak with an authority which cannot attach to any sayings of mine. To both Catholics and Protestants I would recommend the perusal of those lectures which were delivered by John Henry Newman, "the noblest Roman of them all —not long after he left the Establishment, thus, as Lord Beaconsfield said upon one occasion, "dealing the Church of England a blow from which she still reels." In those lectures you will find almost every popular objection against the Church met with a charm of literary style and with a courteousness of expression which, so far as I know, has never been equalled; and even those who remain unconvinced of the truth of the Church will be constrained to admit that there is at least another aspect of things which seemed to them to admit of only one, and that a bad one. It has been well said that the truths of the Church are like stained glass windows in a building: look at them from without, all is confusion; but go inside, let the light of heaven stream through them, and each colour takes its place in the glorious and beautiful picture which is presented to your delighted gaze. So from without, the doctrines of the Church seem dark and confused; but the light from heaven pours through them to those within.

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